The Politics of Race and Class and the Development of Public Education in Georgia: A Qualitative Study of Retired African American Teachers' Perspectives on Schooling From 1930 to 1970

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a qualitative study that chronicles the development of public schooling in Georgia and uses interviews to focus on the perspectives and meaning that 11 retired African American public school teachers associated with their experiences as teachers and students between 1930 and 1970.

A tape recorder and field notes were used to record the interviews. The participants' stories were transcribed and reconstructed into portraits. Data analysis consisted of organizing data into coded sections using the Ethnograph Version 4, qualitative data analysis computer software. These data were then analyzed using the phenomenological approach as the dominant method of analysis.

In interviews participants expressed how they dealt with school issues before and after desegregation. In the portraits they questioned some of the assumptions and conclusions found in traditionally negative historical literature about African American teachers and reported specific success stories to support their claims. The participants offered their perspectives on themes such as: African American teacher pedagogy, teacher training, community and family influence, and the structure and character of segregated and desegregated schools.

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PREFACE

I am an African American male who grew up in rural South Georgia. I was educated in Georgia's public schools, which were by law, segregated at the time. I have vivid memories of many experiences similar to those described by the 11 retired African American teachers who tell their stories as participants in this study. As an instructor of mathematics at a historically black state university in South Georgia, I am constantly confronted with young African American students who are all too eager to share their stories regarding racial or class issues that they encountered within the integrated public schools they attended.

In one of my doctoral level research classes, I conducted a pilot study in which I interviewed eight retired African American teachers about their perspectives on race and schooling in Georgia. My students' stories, along with recent insights and interests I developed as a result of the pilot study, motivated me to commit to dissertation study. Since I believe that public schooling is the primary source and foundation of Georgia's education for Black children, I decided to focus my doctoral research on the politics of public school development and on public schooling as seen through the eyes of retired Black teachers.

A logical assertion is that it is through a more complete understanding of the past that we will be better equipped to make sound decisions in an effort to correct the present problems such as those shared with me by my students, as well as potential future problems associated with race, economics, and politics in the

Georgia educational system. I believe that a dissertation in which African American teachers share their perspectives about schooling could enlighten readers and provide them with valuable information about the historical context of educational developments in Georgia from segregation to integration and the African American teachers' perspectives of what it was like to make the transition.

I chose the period from 1930 to 1970 used in the title of this dissertation for three reasons: (a) the selected period covers the years in which the participants who reported about their experiences were either public school students or they were actively working as public school teachers; (b) this period covers a significant time period prior to and immediately after public schools began the desegregation process in Georgia; and (c) because 1970 marks the year in which a more genuine and positive change in attitude toward race seemed to have emanated from the governor's office. In 1970, Jimmy Carter became governor of Georgia and led the state toward better race relations that included more positive educational and social change. My focus on the retired African American teachers' perspectives from 1930 to 1970 shows the dominant role that race, politics, and economics played in the development of Georgia's modern public school system.

Chapter I introduces the research problem and research questions. It also establishes the context of the problem, the purpose for the study, and its significance. In order to provide a complete foundational context, in Chapter II, I present a literature-based historical overview that begins in 1877 and progresses forward through the turn of the 21st century and conclude with research data

reported as late as November 11, 2002 and newspaper data reported as late as April 28, 2004. The historical chapter focused on the political atmosphere and racial attitudes that existed during the early development of Georgia's public education system. It recounted the emphasis politicians and other prominent Georgians placed on race, and the arguments they made that coupled African Americans to economic development in Georgia through cheap labor and servitude—two significant matters that clearly influenced and shaped schooling in Georgia since the mid 1800s (Anderson, 1988).

However, understanding the historical context is only a necessary introduction to the heart of the dissertation. It lays the groundwork for understanding the social and political conditions in Georgia during the critical period in which public education was being shaped (about the first 70 years immediately after 1900). The historical chapter also adds a perspective to the retired African American teachers' accounts regarding school issues and conditions encountered when they were students and later as teachers in both segregated and integrated schools.

The retired teachers that participated in this study taught in different counties across Georgia. However, in writing the historical chapter, I chose to highlight the school desegregation problem of Lowndes County in more detail because its school desegregation process appeared to be typical to most other Georgia counties and because Valdosta State University, the school that I attended while studying for the doctorate degree, is located in Lowndes County.

An enormous amount of the explanations and rationale for the historical development of Georgia's public education system is credited to the records of Dr. Charles W. Dabney, former professor, past president of the University of Tennessee, and former Director of the Bureau of Investigation and Information for the Southern Education Board of the Capon Springs Conference for Education in the South. Dr. Dabney's (1969) records and accounts of the historical development of public education in Georgia are chronicled in volumes I and II of *Universal Education in the South: The Southern Education Movement*, reprinted by Arno Press and the New York Times.

Equal credit is also due to the substantive and profound degree of intensity of the research conducted by Thomas V. O'Brien (1999), which is recorded in his book, *The Politics of Race and Schooling: Public Education in Georgia, 1900-1961,* published by Lexington. Equal in importance is the solidly constructed research findings by Dr. James D. Anderson (1988), whose historical accounts are referred to as the seminal history of the education of Blacks in the South by Michelle Foster (M. Foster, personal communication, January 30, 2002), and is masterfully presented in his book, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860—1935*, published by the University of North Carolina Press. I must also acknowledge with great distinction the fastidious research conducted by Henry Allen Bullock (1967), which he presents with great detail and frankness in his book, *A History of Negro Education in the South: From 1619 to the Present*, published by the Harvard University Press.

The portrait chapter (Chapter III) follows the history chapter and consists of portraits (case studies) of the 11 retired teachers interviewed. Each portrait was based on the participants' perspectives and personal experiences, and they were constructed without the constraints associated with rigid theoretical perspectives and analytical interpretations that have accompanied many traditional studies by other researchers (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983). The portraits are an important component of the study because they are constructed using primarily the participants' own words, which give a firsthand account of the teachers' experiences. Because of this, the participants became the facilitators who framed meaning through the reports of their personal experiences. As described by Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) and used extensively by Foster (1997), I used this unique data presentation technique of portraits to offer the reader perspective on context. Presenting interview data in this manner provided an opportunity to present a first-person account for contextualizing and understanding what the participants in this study reported.

The fourth chapter is a summary across the portraits that employed a phenomenological analysis of the participants' interviews. This chapter reduces the data collected from the participants' interviews into specific categories and provides analytical interpretations of what participants were saying (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The research questions and sub questions are addressed in this chapter.

Chapter V is the discussion chapter and it follows the summary across the portraits and data analysis chapter. In this chapter I offer significant researcher points of view as a result of the data analysis. In this chapter I integrated findings from the literature that support conclusions within this study. The discussion chapter also provides significant implications drawn from the study and offers some recommendations, which I believe to be significant in follow-up studies and for extending this study.

I further believe that data gathered from the study and presented in this order offer readers a natural flow for connecting with and following the story of the development of the public school system of Georgia over a 70-year period that encompassed the transformation of racially segregated public schools to a desegregated school system. The manner in which this study is organized and presented provides a direct and clear approach that discloses some of the key factors that impacted public schools, and the perspectives of African American teachers regarding conditions and events encountered in a system created through racism, economic goals that served the interests of the White power structure, and defiant politicians.

The section on research methodology, which contains the technical aspects of research design, data collection, data analysis, research validity, and information about the pilot study, is located in Appendix A. Locating the research methodology chapter in the appendix provides a smooth flow for readers to move through the introduction, the historical development chapter, the participants'

portraits, the summary across portraits, and the discussion and conclusion chapter without becoming entangled in the technical components of qualitative research. The research methodology section furnishes information about how the study was designed and conducted. Information about techniques for analyzing qualitative data is a key point of focus in the research methodology section.

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I offer special thanks to my loving wife, Linda. She continually cheered me on to the finish line. She has been my loving supporter since the beginning of my doctoral program.

To my wonderful children, Patrice, Christian, Xavier, and Persephone, I love you all and I thank you for believing in me. I am so proud of each of you.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study with love, to my wife, Linda June McCloud Shelton. Linda has been a dedicated public school teacher in Georgia for 30 years.

Chapter I.

INTRODUCTION

The Research Project

This dissertation is a study of 11 retired African American teachers living in Georgia. These retired African American teachers present their perspectives on educational experiences and discuss some of the educational practices, conditions, and events, which they experienced in Georgia between 1930 and 1970. The dissertation documents the perspectives of these retired African American public school teachers from Georgia.

Problem Statement. The original plans for the organization of public education and the arrangements for its delivery in Georgia might have negatively affected African American teachers and students. In particular, public education might have developed under a veil of racism aimed at limiting African Americans to only enough literacy to be good servants and laborers as opposed to being an instrument for enhancing culture, social, and economic prosperity for all Americans.

Context of the Problem

Modern public schools Georgians know today were born out of a defiant resistance-movement waged by a group of powerful and influential Whites who

led an inflammatory and bitter fight against the efforts to desegregate a public school system that would not allow Blacks to receive equity in the educational process. A view of the history of education in Georgia clearly indicates that the early schools (about 1850) in Georgia maintained acute racial disparities. Prior to the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, there were no state or local provisions made for formal public schooling of the state's Black population, free or enslaved (Jackson, Stakes, Hepburn, & Hepburn, 1992).

Eighteenth century Black codes gave slaves the right to religious instruction but imposed fines against anyone who taught a slave to write or read. Blacks that were not freed were forbidden to learn to read (Jackson, et al., 1992). Despite prohibitions and severe punishments, Blacks understood the value of literacy and many learned to read regardless of restrictions imposed on them by White power brokers (Foster, 1997). Research conducted by Weiler (1990) and Anderson (1988) clearly suggested that African Americans have continuously valued education as a method to achieve individual enrichment and social progress.

Public schooling in Georgia had a bitter and often inflammatory beginning. Racism fueled the public education system in Georgia from its inception through the 1960s (Foster, 1997). It was a system, which more often than not fostered a state of despair for Georgia's Black population. In order to continue meaningful improvement to public education in Georgia for all of its citizens, it is significant to acknowledge and understand how African American teachers and students

faired in a system in which they were the targets of social and economic injustices, bigotry, and racism.

By the nineteenth century, laws existed that mandated fines and whippings for Blacks who taught other Blacks to read. Any Whites who were caught teaching Blacks were fined and jailed. According to W. E. B. DuBois (1963), Blacks were disliked and feared in direct proportion to their intelligence and capacity. Schools where Blacks were taught were burned, and so-called "nigger teachers" (DuBois, 1963, p. 646) were ostracized and threatened. At the turn of the nineteenth century, Whites in general were insulted by the desire of Blacks to secure literacy, and incensed by any Black person who sought a liberal education. If Whites were to support any type of education for Blacks, then that education would have to as a prerequisite, perpetuate and promote White supremacy in both form and function (O'Brien, 1999). Many White Americans believed that Black teachers were incapable of providing an excellent education for African American students without the help of White teachers and White leadership. The larger society in America believed that segregated Black schools, particularly in the South, were inferior to White schools anywhere (Foster, 1997).

Although segregation existed for many years in the South, it was during the forty-year period covered by this study that school segregation was ruled unconstitutional and court ordered school integration was mandated throughout the South (*Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 US 483, 1954). Education became the instrument through which America would test and gauge racial integration as a

means to help eliminate some of the social and moral injustices that African Americans suffered. Integrated schools were intended to improve education for African Americans and help bring an end to some of the inequities that Black Americans faced under a government and in a society that had allowed racism, hatred, and segregation to flourish (Anderson, 1988; Foster, 1997).

At various locations within this study, I used different names to identify African Americans. The terms "Black," "Colored," and "Negro" were taken from various sources cited within this study and are used interchangeably to identify African Americans. Some sources quoted within the study used the terms "darkey," "nigger," "niggers," and "niggras" as a derogatory term and manner for referring to African Americans. I used such terms within the study to accurately reflect the timeframe, language, culture, and activities being reported.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the affects that public education in Georgia had on African American teachers and students. Additionally, the purpose of the study is to determine whether public education might have developed under a veil of racism aimed at limiting African Americans and then report on the culture, processes, resources, and conditions that African American educators experienced during the period from 1930 to 1970. I was particularly interested in disclosing Black teachers' experiences regarding racism and other racial issues that confronted them in both segregated and integrated school environments.

Through this study I aimed to increase the limited body of existing data relative to African American teachers' contributions to public schooling in Georgia and their role in improving the quality of life for a significant segment of Georgia's population. This work represents an opportunity to provide readers a window through which to view the culture of African American teachers and document some of the historical accounts that were significant to the development of public schooling in Georgia. As I embarked upon this project I had an acute desire to examine teachers' individual situations and investigate whether or not a Caste System existed within the schools where they taught. In addition to the four primary research questions that follow, I was particularly interested in seeking the perspectives of African American teachers regarding several questions that often yield conflicting answers when posed to Whites in the Deep South. My intention was for the study to inform the following research questions and sub questions so readers would be better able to understand the extent to which a system predicated on race and social injustice affected life in general for Blacks in Georgia.

The Research Questions

I determined a set of four fundamental questions to address the goals and purposes described above and to serve as the foundation from which the study would evolve. These primary questions served as a general foundation for the development of interview questions for soliciting information. The four research questions are: (a) What were the affects of racism that Black teachers experienced during the forty-year period immediately prior to 1970? (b) What were the special

challenges, if any, Black teachers faced and how did they deal with them? (c) What were schools like before and after school integration? and (d) Was there a unique African American pedagogy and if so, to what extent did it change, if any, after school integration?

An extensive review of the history of the relationship between politics, race, economics, and education gave rise to a subset of six additional areas that I needed to address with the participants. Consequently, I used the following six questions as an initial map and point of reference for conducting interviews. These additional sub questions were: (a) Did status levels based solely on racial make-up exist in education during the period in which the teachers in this study taught? (b) What limitations, if any, did race impose on Black teachers who either held or desired to hold certain administrative positions in education? (c) How did race impact promotions, salaries, and even recognition for excellence in teaching for African American teachers? (d) To what extent did racism or race define the quality of education for Black teachers and students? (e) Did Black teachers have to meet the same qualifications as White teachers when teaching Black students as compared to teaching White students? and (f) How did African American teachers see or evaluate themselves?

It is noteworthy that I mention that the four research questions linked with the emergent sub questions provided a basis for identifying events, circumstances, and conditions that African American teachers and students endured up to and after desegregation of Georgia's public schools. I further believe that these are

significant questions that we must deal with from an African American perspective in order to profoundly understand how a system marked with defiance and bold resistance against African Americans affected their ability to achieve a quality education, and a standard of living above poverty.

Significance of Study

This study is important because it makes known the attitudes, philosophies, and beliefs of Black teachers and the role they played in educating African American children primarily during the shift from segregated to integrated schools in Georgia. Such information is an essential backdrop for understanding the ongoing and yet to be accomplished efforts to establish racial equity in Georgia's schools. This is particularly significant in view of the fact that 38% of the public school students in Georgia are African American (Georgia Department of Education, 2004). Moreover, this study has protracted significance since recent research by Siddle Walker (2001) clearly indicated that significant contributions and other data about Black teachers in Georgia had thus far been given little attention in the literature.

Therefore, research data in this area have value in either confirming or negating or simply adding additional information to the existing sources of information. Siddle Walker further reported in her research that the years 1940-1960 captured an era that had been rarely explored in historical studies of African American teaching. This dissertation addresses the years 1930-1970, and will certainly increase the body of knowledge available about the perspectives of

African American teachers in Georgia during an era for which there is very limited data—the era that surrounded public school desegregation and in which some of the most significant court decisions in the history of public education in America were made.

The study is equally significant because it afforded an opportunity for African American teachers to share how they felt about education, its delivery, and its importance as a profession. African American teachers were asked to share their perspectives on the ways in which race and racism impacted American society and to offer ways to cope with adversity related to race, economic, and educational issues in the classroom and in the school in general. This dissertation allowed Black teachers a chance to express their views on the important role education played in helping Blacks strive for equity and a sense of dignity in America.

This study has a unique historical significance because it presents a firsthand account of the efficacy of public education in Georgia and its effect on social, moral, and economic improvement from a Black perspective. For decades, the public has associated many myths with Black teachers and the education of Black students (Foster, 1997). This study encompasses a number of perspectives from retired Black teachers that helps dispel some of those common myths and misconceptions about Black educators' preparation and commitment to the teaching profession. It provides first person accounts of Black perspectives on public education that might lead to a deeper understanding for all educators and

parents about some of the current diversity needs and issues in education both in Georgia and more generally.

As noted above, current literature on how Blacks dealt with constant negative experiences as educators and as human beings desiring to improve the quality of their lives and of their students is somewhat limited. Consequently, it is very significant that research in this area continue so that existing literature will be expanded with a resultant increase in the depth and accuracy of our understanding of these issues. A forward move in this direction will require the efforts of Black teachers and scholars, as well as others whose experiences and insights allow them to make meaningful contributions to this body of knowledge. In addition to expanding the literature, this study is also significant because it supplies an additional resource that young African Americans and other teachers and educators can use in order to acquaint themselves with some of the teaching philosophies, pedagogical practices, and the ethics of caring that proved successful for older more experienced Black teachers (Foster, 1990a, 1990b, 1993; Henry, 1992).

The research data presented in this study serve as a significant source of fresh and new information about how African Americans were truly affected by racism and how they coped with teaching in a system in which they were often looked upon as unimportant and less worthy than White teachers. Additionally, it was hoped that as the research emerged some practical suggestions might be discovered to aide policy development related to managing disciplinary situations

involving minorities in public schools. I am in agreement with Delpit (1988) that by learning what older African American teachers had to say about the culture of Blacks and Black schooling, a broader understanding of cultural differences might be achieved.

By examining the way school inequities adversely impacted African Americans and the way in which African American teachers adapted to those inequities, it is hoped that others might make needed adaptations to the broader context of American education which might improve overall teaching effectiveness. This study of what happened in Georgia's public schools over a 40 year period is intended to provide current teachers and administrators with information that might be valuable in assisting them to better manage classrooms and improve teacher-to-teacher and teacher-to-student relationships within integrated schools. Research scholars link the significance of a study such as this one to an important social and economic need among African Americans (Foster, 1997).

Modern scholars assert that establishing an African American teaching perspective is significant because it is needed to produce an education that contributes to "achieving pride, equity, power, wealth, and cultural continuity" (Lee, Lomotey, & Shujaa, 1990, p. 47), as well as to advance character development within the context of the African American community and culture. Because of the huge disparity in the social, economic, and educational status of

Blacks and other minorities as compared to Whites, I believe that this study is equally significant among Whites who are capable and willing to effect change.

From an historical perspective, the significance and value of the study is that it might serve as a resource to a clearer and more complete knowledge and understanding of how racism impacted education in Georgia. Being fully informed about the past curtails making repeated mistakes and allows for making better decisions about the present and in the future.

Conceptual Framework

The literature that contributes to the conceptual framework of this study is the literature on the historical formation of public education in Georgia. The resources that I used for this project included books, newspaper articles, journal articles, and private papers and letters, which were retrieved from a number of college and university libraries. I used libraries at Albany State University, Columbus State University, Darton College, Emory University, Florida State University, Fort Valley State University, Georgia State University, the University of Georgia, and Valdosta State University. Other sources of data included the Internet, personal interviews with individuals associated with the Southern Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation located in Charleston, South Carolina, and the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources located in Atlanta, Georgia.

My interpretation of these data and others in this dissertation is informed by my own lifetime of experiences while growing up in Georgia as a Black student

and educator. The social, political, and economic systems that impacted the development of public schooling in Georgia and in the Southern states in general were quite different from those that led to the development of public schooling in other regions of the country. Public education in Georgia developed in the context of an overtly racist society with distinct laws that governed and supported White southern ideology (O'Brien, 1999). I am African American and a product of Georgia's segregated public school system. I experienced learning and being taught from hand-me-down books from White schools in the "separate-but-equal" system that existed in Georgia until the mid 1960s.

In addition to the historical accounts and my own perspectives on public schooling in Georgia, this study provides African American teachers' perspectives regarding a system of public schooling that was designed to insure White supremacy (Bullock, 1967). The social and racial issues that molded early public education (the pre-integration years) in Georgia and how these issues impacted African American teachers are significant components that serve as the framework for many assumptions, beliefs, myths, and truths associated with Black educators. The conceptual context, including any set of concepts, beliefs, assumptions, expectations, and various connections or associations between them, emerged as the study progressed through the interview process (Punch, 2000). This set of beliefs or guiding principles is manifested in the teachers' portraits.

Myths About Black Education

There are many myths interwoven into the fabric of school desegregation, not only in Georgia but also throughout America. As documented in the history of education in Georgia presented in this study, some Whites believed that African Americans could not teach as well as Whites. Some believed that because of skin color all Blacks were automatically able to relate to each other (Foster, 1997).

I was confronted with these mythical beliefs many times as a young African American student growing up in Southwest Georgia and as an adult during my professional career as an educator. Those who perpetuated these myths often overlooked the fact that many people belonging to the same race or ethnic group are different because of their different experiences and ideologies (Foster, 1997). Foster (1997) spoke of a debilitating myth embedded within the civil rights struggle that continues to haunt African Americans. This myth, often repeated in one form or another, is that many Whites believed that segregated Black schools were inferior to White schools. The myth claims that the reason Black people fought so hard for desegregation was that deep down they agreed with the larger society's view that without access to White resources such as White culture, White schools and teachers, and White leadership, Blacks could never adequately educate Black children nor secure a decent future for the Black race.

Foster (1997) discounted this belief as myth, stating that the real reason for the school desegregation struggle was to gain economic benefits and resources that were not afforded Black children but commonly afforded White children. O'Brien

(1999) reported that during the early 1900s and prior to desegregation of public schools in Georgia, one of the prevailing myths among Whites was that most Blacks in Georgia preferred enforced segregation. Charles Dabney (1969b) recounted an incredible myth rooted in the beliefs and spoken by some Whites since the turn of the twentieth century. It is the myth that African Americans were unhappy when taught the fine arts and educated beyond that of a common trade.

Roy Harris, the staunch segregationist from Augusta, Georgia, claimed and also helped spread the myth believed by many southern Whites that Blacks wanted only to mingle with Whites. Benjamin E. Mays, president of Morehouse College, in Atlanta, Georgia, countered this myth by arguing that Blacks only wanted the same education that Whites were getting (O'Brien, 1999).

Rossell and Hawley (1983) expounded on one of the great myths in America; the melting pot myth. Their work claimed that segregated schools kept us acutely aware of just how separate we were in America and exposed the myth of America as the great melting pot where equal opportunity for employment and education existed, and where equity in social mobility was shared by all.

As a young African American growing up and being educated in the segregated public schools of Georgia, I was taught at an early age that laws segregated schools and other public facilities and that the law stated that our schools were separate-but-equal. Many times Black teachers would tell us that our schools were indeed separate but we were not equal. By the time I reached high school, I understood through personal experience that the separate-but-equal law

Chapter II.

A HISTORICAL VIEW OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN GEORGIA

A Historical Perspective

For many years, America has been a world leader in science, medicine, technology, world politics, military strength, education, and many other areas. Given the history and vast accomplishments of the United States of America, it generally accepted without question that America is one of the most progressive societies in the world. Yet, poverty and racism are ugly realities that have been a moral defect in the history of America. Through the mid 1990s, in more cunning and deceitful ways modern day lynchings, violence, and abuse have not stopped despite open protest against such social injustice and unfair treatment of Blacks and other minorities within the larger segment of the American population (Ballantine, 1997). These problems are reflected in American school systems as in many other parts of society. Consequently, our schools developed as segregated institutions and reflect many of the problems that plague the larger society in America (Ballantine, 1997).

The historical perspective of the rise of public education in Georgia presented in this study is an examination of a fraction of the full scope of many factors that impacted how and why public schooling in Georgia followed its

particular course of development. This chapter provides an historical abstract of the growth and change of Georgia's educational system from 1877 through the 1990s. Politics, economics, and race were three of the major factors that shaped Georgia's public school system and as such are themes throughout this historical overview.

The Development of Public Education in Georgia

To gain a clearer picture of the worth and value of this study, it is essential that one acquire some knowledge of the politics, social modes, and patterns that epitomized education in Georgia between 1900 and 1960, the period in which segregated schools lawfully existed within the state. When that knowledge is combined with an understanding of the perspectives of African Americans who fought for equity in education for Blacks from 1960 through the 1990s, a clearer picture emerges regarding the Black struggle for reforms in public education. The latter 40-year period depicts the years that public schools in Georgia actually began racial integration and matured under the desegregation process.

The difficult and extended plight of African American teachers and schooling for African American children in Georgia is rooted deeply in racial politics, economics, and the Georgia State Constitution. Shortly after reconstruction, following the Civil War, many southern states, including Georgia, developed a system of legal and cultural apartheid (Moore, 1967). In 1877, the newly constructed Georgia Constitution provided for free public education open to all citizens. This free state provided public education, which was known as

common schooling. However, this free public education for all Georgia children was segregated by race (Orr, 1950). During the early 1900s every southern state had legal racial segregation laws, known as "Jim Crow" laws (Woodward, 1974). In 1896 the U.S. Supreme Court, in a case known as *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) ruled in favor of a Louisiana law requiring segregated-but-equal passenger cars on trains. The high court's decision led to subsequent approval and application of the *Plessy* separate-but-equal tenets in all public facilities, including common public schools. As a result of this ruling, schools in Georgia were separated based on race, however; the White power structure in the South made little pretense of upholding the "equal" part of the separate-but-equal doctrine (Woodward, 1969).

The history of the public educational system in Georgia is interwoven into the political machine that laid the framework for education that would last for nearly a century. Powerful politicians and elites who maintained a doctrine of segregation and separate-but-equal schooling in Georgia chiseled the making of Georgia's current public school system out of conniving political activities and bitter legal battles in the courts. In the early 1900s, leaders of the state, including Georgia's governors, and other elite and influential White power brokers, used race and racism to shape the schooling of Blacks and consequently the public school system of Georgia (Anderson, 1988).

The Turn of the Twentieth Century

White politicians and other leaders in Georgia, as well as throughout the South were gravely concerned about the issue of Negro education since the days of the Civil War and were not in favor of a liberal arts education for African Americans (Anderson, 1988; Dabney, 1969a). Even during the days of slavery, African Americans had shown a strong desire to read, write, and become educated (Bullock, 1967).

The Capon Springs Conferences

In June 1898, Southern educational leaders, which included leaders from Georgia, Tennessee, South and North Carolina, and West Virginia came together and held the first annual Capon Springs Conference for education in the South, which was followed by sixteen consecutive annual conferences. The first conference convened in Capon Springs, West Virginia, and addressed two primary questions: (a) How far could public schools throughout the South be improved and made effective? and (b) how far was it feasible to introduce industrial education? These two basic questions led the conference to begin seeking solutions for the many educational problems that were plaguing Georgia and other southern states (Anderson, 1988; Bullock, 1967; Dabney, 1969a). The Conference was made up almost entirely of southern men and women with a few northerners participating as well. However, the majority of the conference board members were southern men.

The Hampton-Tuskegee Curriculum. The Hampton-Tuskegee curriculum grew out of the ideologies and educational philosophies of Samuel Chapman Armstrong. Samuel Armstrong established the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in 1868, in Hampton, Virginia, now known as Hampton University. His most admired and prized student, Booker T. Washington, founded Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in 1881, in Tuskegee, Alabama, now known as Tuskegee University. The Hampton-Tuskegee curriculum was centered on the training of teachers but with an emphasis on trade and agricultural training designed primarily to teach Blacks steady work habits, practical knowledge, and strong Christian values (Anderson, 1988). This curriculum would essentially be an ideological force that would offer training and instruction for the purpose of adjusting and limiting Blacks to a subordinate class within the South. It would ultimately ensure White control over Blacks in the South and foster segregation, civil inequality, relegation of Blacks to menial type jobs, and eventually lead to a number of other social and economic disfranchisements for Blacks (Anderson, 1988).

During the early years of public education in Georgia, the second Capon Springs conference held in 1899, set the tone and laid the groundwork for the manner in which public education would proceed to develop in Georgia. At the conference, northern philanthropist William H. Baldwin succinctly articulated the ideology of industrial training for a racially structured form of class subordination

aimed specifically toward the Negro in Georgia and in other southern states. Baldwin stated:

> The potential economic value of the Negro population properly educated is infinite and incalculable. In the Negro is the opportunity of the South. Time has proven that he is best fitted to perform the heavy labor in the Southern states. 'The Negro and the mule is the only combination, so far, to grow cotton'. The South needs him; but the South needs him educated to be a suitable citizen. Properly directed he is the best possible laborer to meet the climatic conditions of the South. He will willingly fill the more menial positions, and do the heavy work, at less wages, than the American white man or any foreign race which has yet come to our shores. This will permit the southern white laborer to perform the more expert labor, and to leave the fields, the mines, and the simpler trades for the Negro. (Anderson, 1988, p. 82)

Baldwin then made it clear to the southern attendants that the Hampton industrial form of education would provide the proper racial hierarchy for southern states by teaching Blacks to "work with their hands," (Anderson, 1988, p. 82) to have "few wants," (p. 82) and to stay within their "natural environment" (p. 82). Baldwin further asserted that the Hampton-Tuskegee curriculum of industrial education was fundamental to the educational ideology of northern philanthropists' support of southern education and not in complete accordance with White supremacists' views on public education for Blacks. The Hampton-Tuskegee plan would serve as a means to reinforce the South's economic structure and as a mechanism to ensure that it functioned efficiently (Anderson, 1988). Consequently, two primary educational ideologies were cast for Georgia and other southern states. Capon Springs conference leaders proposed universal schooling for all, Whites and

Blacks, but Blacks would follow the Hampton-Tuskegee style of industrial education (Anderson, 1988; Dabney, 1969a).

George Foster Peabody, a northern philanthropist, Wall Street businessman and banker, and an original member of the Southern Education Board, provided a fund that assisted the Negro school program in Georgia incidental to its support of public schools in general (Bullock, 1967). Peabody launched a concerted effort to persuade educational leaders of the South that the Hampton-Tuskegee industrial form of education could help build a strong southern economy by using submissive, nonpolitical, cheap Black laborers. Believing that industrial training would "help the Negro fit his environment" (Anderson, 1988, p. 89) in rural Georgia and in other southern states, George F. Peabody campaigned to convince White southern businessmen that an inseparable relation between Black education and the region's material prosperity existed. He argued, "I believe that the South needs their [African American] labor and would be practically bankrupt without it" (Anderson, 1988, p. 89). Using this idea Peabody informed a prominent White Georgia planter and politician that industrially trained Black workers would primarily benefit White investors:

> Have you the least doubt but that if the one million Negroes, constituting nearly one-half of the men, women and children of Georgia were rightly educated to the development of their bodily health and strength and facilities and of the application of the same, which means their minds trained, to have their arms and legs work promptly and accurately in coordination, their moral apprehension rightly trained to know and do the right and avoid the wrong, and their affectional nature encouraged to love and not hate their white neighbors, and to respect and honor their own sexual purity, that

> they would be worth in dollars and cents to the state of Georgia more than three times their present value. If this be true, as I am positively sure that it is, and as the prosperity of the State of Georgia is so largely owned by the white race, would not the gain to the white race, under present methods of distribution, be most incalculable in dollars and cents. (Anderson, 1988, p. 90-91)

White southerners did not accept the more liberal view of normal education for Negroes in the South, which was proposed by a minority of northern educators and a few southern Whites. This defiance led to a compromise within the conference and a deal was struck with southern leaders that would offer a special kind of education that prepared Negroes for the caste position prescribed for them by southern Whites. Among the races, Whites and Blacks were to receive special industrial and trade education but Blacks were to adhere more rigorously to an educational curriculum that would cast them in roles of servitude (Bullock, 1967) The ideas generated by the 1898 Conference for education spread through Georgia and the rest of the South and gave a new impetus to universal education in the former Confederacy and established the foundation for Negro education as we came to know it for the next half century (Bullock, 1967).

Whites were very sensitive about the issue of Negro education, particularly after more liberal views toward the matter of Blacks having access to a normal education were introduced by the Freedmen's Bureau and the Reconstruction legislatures (Dabney, 1969b). The fact that a few Whites were proactively interested in Negro institutions during this period of Georgia's history and especially during the Capon Springs conference proceedings caused many Whites

to believe that the movement was designed to educate the Negro for the purpose of putting "the bottom rail on top," (Dabney, 1969b, p. 45) which became a popular saying during the Reconstruction period. At the root of this antagonistic point of view, of course was the old race prejudice and opposition to educating the Negro at all (Dabney, 1969b).

Governor Allen Daniel Candler, of Georgia, vehemently opposed higher education for Blacks and regarded political power in the hands of Blacks as "a constant menace" that "tainted society" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 12). Governor Candler took an uncompromisingly hostile position and warned Georgians, in his gubernatorial inaugural address in 1900, that the state would not prosper unless Blacks were disfranchised (Grant, 1993; O'Brien, 1999).

The fourth annual Capon Springs Conference for education in the South was relocated from Capon Springs, West Virginia, and held in mid April, 1901, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. After the Winston-Salem Conference ended, Governor Allen Daniel Candler was reported in the *Atlanta Journal Newspaper*, on April 24, 1901, as saying:

> We can attend to the education of the darkey in the South without the aid of these Yankees and give them the education that they most need. I do not believe in the higher education of the darkey. He must be taught the trades. When he is taught the fine arts he is educated above his caste, and it makes him unhappy. (as cited in Dabney, 1969b, p. 46)

Similar statements were made in newspapers in South Carolina and North Carolina. However, other southern governors dissented from this view, at least in

public. Governor Charles Brantley Aycock, also known as the educational governor of North Carolina, responded by expressing the general opinion of the people of the South and indicating that the conference for education at Winston-Salem was a great benefit to southern states. He further stated:

> We get more of the northern view, and the visitors learn more of us. We do not entirely agree, but we respect more than ever the opinions of each other. If the Negro is ever educated it will be by the aid of the southern White men. The North cannot do it. The education of the Whites will precede the education of the Negroes. (Dabney, 1969b, p. 46)

Speaking for North Carolina and somewhat contrary to the sentiments of Georgia's governor, Allen Candler, governor Aycock said:

> Our purpose is to do our full duty by the Negro. We are willing to receive aid for his education, but without aid we shall in the long run teach him. He is with us to stay. His destiny and ours is so interwoven that we cannot help ourselves up without at the same time lifting him. (Dabney, 1969b, p. 46)

Disparities in Black Education. Politicians and the state's White power structure made it clear that Whites and Blacks in Georgia would be educated in two different types of schools and would, in fact, exist in two distinct economic and sociocultural communities. While African Americans in the state occasionally verbally protested such racist disfranchisement, they generally accepted the inferior educational and limited economic and social opportunities imposed by the White majority. African Americans in Georgia would be provided with a "special education," substandard to what White Georgians would receive. Such substandard education would create a way of life in which African Americans in

Georgia would exist and preserve a caste condition based on race and substandard economic conditions. Public schools for African Americans were to serve as the formal means to perpetuate this process (Bullock, 1967). The state of Georgia, lead by its White political leaders and White power brokers, readily adopted the southern tradition of racial segregation for its White and Black citizens.

> Therefore, it was planned that the maintenance of southern traditions as related to Negroes would come through a neat biracial arrangement of peoples and expectations. Negroes were to be kept socially isolated from Whites by means of a rigid system of residential segregation; they were to be limited to special occupational pursuits by means of job restrictions; they were to be tailored in "Negro Ways" through a rigid code of interracial etiquette; and they were to be reinforced in their obedience to caste rules through formal schooling. The point at which this biracial society began forming a way of life for Negroes, tailoring them into a particular social type, and utilizing the schools to serve the ends of segregation marks the real beginning of Negro education as a traditional American institution. (Bullock, 1967, p. 148)

State Commissioner Gustavus R. Glenn, wrote in 1898, "As long as the Negro remains in ignorance, he is a standing menace to everything we hold dear" (as cited in O'Brien, 1999, p. 12). Glenn's cry for improved education for Blacks was typical of the racist beliefs often imposed by the so-called school reformers (O'Brien, 1999). Glenn wrote:

> By nature he is impulsive, sympathetic, emotional, and easily excited; he is instinctively loyal and generous. If the good qualities of his head and heart are wisely directed by proper educational processes he can become a most powerful factor in aiding the Southern people to work out their great industrial problems. It is a great mistake to assume that education hurts the colored man and unfits him for service. I believe the time has now come to add industrial features to our school system. The colored people

> especially need a system of education that will increase their industrial usefulness. (Hill, 1939, p.31)

Northerners who took an interest in what was going on in the South along with a few White reformers made attempts to improve education for Whites and Blacks in Georgia. Between 1895 and 1958, nine state school commissioners asked state school superintendents and legislators not for racial impartiality, but instead for "better treatment for the colored race" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 12). State school leaders appealed for "justice and common sense" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 12) toward Blacks. However, these pleas did not imply equality or the end of oppression, but rather, they sought compassion for Blacks, through a policy and practice of treating and governing Blacks in a parental manner by overseeing them and providing for their needs without giving them rights or allowing them responsibilities (O'Brien, 1999). These so-called reformers and supporters of education for Blacks typically justified public support for Blacks in economic terms.

The early to mid years of the twentieth century in Georgia (from 1900 through 1961), were difficult years for African American teachers and students. Black teachers and Black students were caught in the middle of the bitter war of race and schooling for African Americans. Black teachers found themselves having to balance a socialization process that would reinforce the White imposed Caste System and resist it at the same time. Black teachers skillfully vacillated between teaching students how to accept a racist social structure and one's place in it, and how to soften it so as to allow for increased individual mobility and a

sense of human dignity and self-worth. Black teachers were stern disciplinarians. Joined by parents and the Black community, these teachers demanded that their students be punctual, obedient, well groomed, efficient, and frugal (O'Brien, 1999).

Yet, Whites were ultimately in control and often all-White school boards and other elites from within the White community decided who would teach in the Black public schools. It was not uncommon for the most able and qualified teachers to be selected for employment. However, Black teachers were often selected by some influential White man in the community from among poorly prepared Negroes who had worked for him or had a family member working for him (Bullock, 1967; Logan, 1927; O'Brien, 1999).

Disparities were most apparent in the so-called "Black belt" region of the South, which encompassed all of Georgia. Poverty was concentrated more heavily in this region than in any other U. S. region. Georgia is mostly rural with its total rural area populated by nearly 91% of all African Americans who live in the state, according to the 1990 census (Wimberley & Morris, 1996). The same census report indicated that throughout most of rural Georgia a few wealthy Whites and Whites who were economically stable lived among numerous poor Blacks.

While the state school fund was apportioned in accordance to the number of school-age children in each district, regardless of race, it was left to the discretion of the local school officials and other community leaders as to how the money would be used. Once school funds reached the local communities, these funds

were disproportionately used to profit and advantage White teachers and students at the expense of African American teachers and students. A few wealthy Whites used state appropriated funds for White schools at a rate many times more than for Black teachers and students. In 1910, Whites in the Black Belt region of the South including Georgia, spent approximately $19.23 on each White student compared to only $1.61 for each Black student (O'Brien, 1999).

At the turn of the twentieth century a large number of African Americans lived in Georgia; however, elite Whites (planters, upper-income farmers, professionals, and a growing group of industrialists) in Georgia held absolute control over the administration of all schools in Georgia. These powerful and often wealthy Whites exercised unfair governance of education in Georgia and invoked policies that greatly favored White teachers, White students, and a variety of resources and facilities for Whites only, including libraries. Some Whites often discouraged Blacks from attending school regularly. In some instances many Whites would not permit Blacks that worked for them to obtain any education (O'Brien, 1999).

Personal accounts of stories exist in which my parents told of experiences they encountered between 1930 and 1947 regarding racism that involved Whites beating Blacks and making them work on their farms instead of going to school. These experiences were told about White landowners and farm bosses intimidating and discouraging Blacks from attending school and commanding Blacks to work in the fields instead. I personally know of several accounts (one case includes a

member of my family) in Dougherty, Terrell, and Mitchell counties in which young Black men slipped away from home and families and joined the Army as a result of being discouraged or denied the opportunity to attend school by White landlords and bosses.

At the turn of the twentieth century and for the next 60 years, opportunities for any schooling were somewhat limited for all students, whether Black or White. In 1914, the only public high school for Blacks was located in Athens, Georgia (Coleman, 1991). Even during the late 1920s and throughout what is known as the progressive period of the 1930s, when state superintendent Mauney D. Collins called for improved educational opportunities for all Georgia students, his administration held steadfast and insistently short-changed Black teachers and students by not providing educational services equitable to what Whites received, particularly those at the high school level. Also, Black teachers worked shorter school seasons than White teachers (Broughton, 1969; Bullock, 1967).

Georgia's African American teachers were paid significantly less than White teachers within the same school system. During the school years from 1909-1910, the average monthly salary paid to White teachers in Georgia was $83.37 compared with $36.29 paid to Black teachers (Bullock, 1967). In 1928-1929, the average monthly salary paid to White teachers in Georgia was $97.22 compared with $38.24 paid to Black teachers. The gap in salary based on race narrowed over time, beginning in the late 1960, but the average monthly salary of African American teachers failed to equal that of White teachers for a period of

forty years (Bullock, 1967). These conditions fostered another great irony in Georgia's public education system, which was linked directly to African American teachers. Given the shorter time African American teachers had to work with pupils, the meager salaries that they were paid, and the inferior facilities in which to work, African American teachers were still expected to produce results equivalent to White teachers whose working conditions and salaries were far superior (Bullock, 1967; Foster, 1997).

County authorities and school superintendents often rationalized unequal disbursement, citing that Black schools received financial support from northern philanthropic organizations. However, this reasoning was disingenuous on the part of Whites as these financial gifts provided a small fraction of what was required to operate Black schools (O'Brien, 1999). In spite of pleas from the Black community for more equitable funding for African American education, the vast majority of counties in Georgia made no expenditures for African American education except for salaries of African American teachers, which were far below those offered to White teachers.

Even as African Americans desperately sought to improve their social and economic status through education as they passed to higher grade levels, there were continual signs that they would obtain an education inferior in quality to that of Whites. First, African Americans suffered a disadvantage in the fact that the number of days that they attended school each year was considerably less than the number of days White children attended school. This educational deficiency was

not easily detectable since each county ran its schools in accordance to its own peculiar circumstances. However, by 1910, a policy of racial discrimination had invaded public school administration throughout Georgia's public schools (Anderson, 1988).

In Georgia, between 1909 and 1910, White students attended school 158 days while African American students' school term lasted 126 days, a difference of 32 school days. In terms of percentages, African American students' school term was only 80% of the school term for White students (Anderson, 1988). However, the gap closed somewhat during the 1928-1929 school term when the African Americans' school term grew to about 137 days and the White term remained at 158 days. This created a difference of 21 days, which meant African Americans' school term was now 87% of the White term (Anderson, 1988; Bullock, 1967). The shortened school seasons for African Americans were due to racial and general discriminatory policies held by the ruling White population.

There were several reasons for the shortened school years and excessive absenteeism for Blacks, such as the case in which Black teachers would not have to be paid as much as Whites due to a shorter teaching year. The overall cost of school expenditures for Blacks could be held to a bare minimum. A shorter school term for Blacks would guarantee that Blacks would simply not receive the same amount of education as Whites (Anderson, 1988; Bullock, 1967). Whites would be in charge of businesses and other enterprises, and would hold important positions

in the community; therefore, they were the ones that needed more formal education.

However, foremost to other reasons was the high rate of rural farm tenancy among African Americans, which frequently shortened the limited time for formal schooling, which public policy had afforded Black children (Anderson, 1988). This was especially harsh on African American students since most of them lived in rural areas of Georgia where their parents worked as farmers and most often as sharecroppers under White landowners (Bullock, 1967). In 1930, the percent of farm tenancy for African Americans, which was primarily sharecropping for White landowners, was 87.2%. The average number of school days attended by African American children in Georgia that same year was 90 out of a school year that was 128 days for African American and 158 days for Whites (Bullock, 1967). The absence of Blacks from school, which was heavily influenced by White powerful farmers and businessmen, was a decided economic advantage to Whites and the Georgia economy.

Everyday that Blacks spent out of school was a day of profitable work, at little or no cost to White landowners (Anderson, 1988; Bullock, 1967). The absence from school by young African Americans meant a favorable economic advantage to White farmers and landlords. Many landowners often persuaded and influenced Black parents to keep children out of school for sustained periods each year to work the fields and crops during the growing and harvest seasons. One of the great ironies associated with the economic and educational systems in Georgia

is that African American opportunities to learn and prosper through education were often severely limited by an economy that prospered greatly from their labor (Bullock, 1967).

In an attempt to balance the inequity, many Blacks held classes in churches, barns, abandoned houses, and cabins with an inadequate number of chairs, benches, desks or other school supplies. A report issued in 1927 by a female observer on the conditions of Black common schooling in Georgia cited that more than one-half of Georgia's "colored children are taught in churches, lodges and dwellings" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 10). Many of the facilities' structures were old, unheated, poorly lit, one-teacher schools, with "plank benches, which sometimes have no backs" (p. 10). The facilities, she concluded, were "unfit for teaching purposes" (p. 10). A meager stipend from the state supplemented by fund-raising in the Black community paid teacher salaries, which was often "as low as $15 per month" (p. 10), plus an additional "ten and fifteen cents per pupil, which was paid by the patrons" (p. 10). Most Black schools during the 1920s and 1930s in Georgia had no libraries, transportation, and few precious textbooks and other school supplies (O'Brien, 1999). During the late 1920s, it was reported that nine counties in Georgia had no Black school at all and in many counties in Georgia there were no African American high schools. In a majority of rural areas in Georgia, African American schools lasted four months and instruction rarely exceeded the fifth grade (Hill, 1939; Logan, 1927).

Pre World War II Education in Georgia

From the inception of public education in Georgia, and in other Southern states up through the 1930s, the average southern White student completing grammar school spent 65.6 months of classroom time as compared with 57.6 months of classroom time spent by an African American student. Clearly, shorter school terms for African Americans and a special education designed primarily to equip Blacks for menial labor and localized industries was an attempt to keep Blacks in capacities of servitude, and place Whites at an advantage over Blacks. These conditions assured Whites that they would prevail over Blacks and that a pool of less educated dependent Blacks would exist for cheap labor and common services that Whites desired (Anderson, 1988; Bullock, 1967; O'Brien, 1999). Shorter school terms for Blacks also translated into a much smaller amount of money for the provisions of educating African American students as compared to educating White students (Bullock, 1967).

During the 1930s, Black Georgians displayed a determination to gain greater educational opportunities for their children. For African Americans trapped in the basement of the socioeconomic structure, education had long been considered the key to social and economic improvement (Kusimo, 1999). Also, during the 1930s, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) organized a major movement to improve the education system for African Americans in Georgia. It was during the 1930s and early 1940s that several leading Black organizations such as the NAACP, the Legal Defense and

Education Fund (LDF), and the Southern Region Council (SRC) put forth agendas on how to advance the social and educational status of Blacks.

Many leading figures in the Black community such as W.E.B. Dubois, E. Franklin Frazier, Grace Hamilton of the Atlanta Urban League; Horace Mann Bond, the President of Fort Valley State College; Carter G. Woodson, Benjamin Mays, the President of Morehouse College; Joseph Winthrop Holley, the President of Albany State College; and a host of other educational and community leaders debated their different views on how to proceed to improve education for African Americans in Georgia (Cruse, 1987; Hector, 1978; Holley, 1949; Mays, 1971).

Before World War II, there was no agreement on how to proceed in the Black community. Some of the factions opposed the idea of school integration while others thought segregation bred misunderstanding and racial hatred (Hector, 1978). Professor W. E. B. Dubois of the Atlanta University, perhaps the best-known Black radical intellectual, opposed school integration in Georgia. He believed that integration would not adequately address the economic and educational deficit Blacks encountered as a result of racial injustice. However, Dubois understood that open access to schooling and citizenship education were critical to the Black struggle and admitted that segregation was a threat to democracy. Professor Dubois believed that school integration would destroy the caring school-church-community triangle that had nurtured Black children; a flourishing system Blacks developed under segregation with very limited finances (Hector, 1978).

Black schools. The overall median level of expenditures for the state at that time was $800.00. The range in the level of support was from less than $100.00 per classroom unit to more than $2,500.00 (Norton & Lawler, 1944).

Ironically, it was the war that exposed educational deficiencies that would fundamentally change the educational system over the next half-century. The war made it quite apparent that the educational deficiencies of African Americans and others outside of the mainstream of American society gave rise to a national security risk. African Americans attempting to enlist in the military were rejected twice as often as Whites due to illiteracy. In Georgia, approximately 58% of Black registrants, which constituted the seventh highest in the United States, were rejected compared to approximately 47% of White registrants, which was the second highest in the United States (Department of Education Report, June 30, 1948).

Post World War II Education in Georgia

The end of World War II in 1945 brought an opportunity for Georgia and other southern states to focus attention on addressing problems in the educational system. After World War II, moderate Blacks began to view integration as a more expedient means of fostering democracy and improving their educational, economic, and social status (O'Brien, 1999). Politicians and educational leaders called for improvements in public education on a grand scale. In 1944, John K. Norton headed a study known as *An Inventory of Public School Expenditures.* The study found that Georgia ranked in a three-way tie for fifth from the bottom,

spending only a median of $800.00 per classroom (Norton, 1946; O'Brien, 1999). In 1947, Dr. Omer Clyde Aderhold, Dean of the College of Education at the University of Georgia, conducted a study that revealed that Georgia's rural White schools and Black schools were far below city and national norms in state assisted funding for rural schools, teacher training, teacher salaries, modern buildings, and transportation (O'Brien, 1999).

Defiance and the Southern Way of Life. From the mid 1940s through 1952, a host of White political kingpins, White state and local power brokers, and other White community leaders waged a bitter war against Georgia's Courts and against any organization or individual who argued for improved education and the rights of the Negro. These defiant anti-Black individuals, who declared to preserve the "Southern Way of Life" (Belvin, 1966, p. 43), which meant racial segregation and White supremacy ("An unofficial timeline of educational events," 2004), and fight against and resist the "northern agitators," (Belvin, 1966, p. 43) and the "Moscow-Harlem zoot-suiters" (p. 43) included M. D. Collins and Roy V. Harris. Collins was a State Superintendent of Schools, who supported school reform to benefit Whites, and Roy V. Harris was a self described racist who had served in both Houses of the Georgia General Assembly and had been Speaker of the House for nine years between 1937 and 1946. To Harris, race superseded all other political issues. Roy V. Harris was a staunch segregationist and an enemy of anyone who favored improving the quality of lives for Blacks. Also, former governors of Georgia (a father and son duo), Eugene Talmadge and Herman Talmadge, were

two powerful Georgians who were devout racists. Both Eugene and his son Herman campaigned for governor with Ku Klux Klan members at their sides (O'Brien, 1999).

Governor Eugene Talmadge died in 1946. However, his son, Herman, continued his strong hold on Georgia; fighting against racial equality and a better life for Blacks for many years after the death of his father. Herman served as governor of Georgia from January 14, 1947 to March 18, 1947, which completed a disputed term of sixty-seven days after the death of his father. At the end of the shortened term, in a special election he was formerly elected governor and served from November 17, 1948 to January 9, 1951. He was re-elected and served as governor from January 9, 1951 to January 11, 1955. In 1956, Herman Talmadge was elected to the United States Senate, where he served until he was defeated for re-election in 1980. Talmadge is now (at the time this dissertation was being written) 86 years old and still lives in Georgia.

Historically, the White supremacist views of powerful Georgians such as Roy V. Harris, Eugene Talmadge, and Herman Talmadge have not been unique among Georgia politicians. Thomas E. Watson, a well-known Georgian and former Georgia Governor, and Lester Maddox held comparable ideologies. Both these well-known Georgians espoused two contradictory myths. Both believed that America was a land where "all men are created equal," and also, "America is a White man's country" (Hector, 1978, p. 43; O'Brien, 1999, p. 58). The concept of the "common man" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 58) did not include Blacks and therefore,

clearly defined the limit of loyalty to a truly democratic vision of public schools in Georgia. The school Maddox and Watson conceptualized, would suffer indefinitely from this internal conflict striving for democratic equality while fostering a privileged White race (O'Brien, 1999).

Private Organizations Enter the School Problem. In 1944, the Atlanta Urban League, under Hamilton's directorship since 1942, compiled and distributed more than 250,000 pamphlets and brochures, containing charts and photographs as evidence documenting White educational advantages in that city's public school system. The compilation and dissemination of these documents was a massive operation that involved White and Black civic, social, and church organizations throughout Atlanta (O'Brien, 1999; Spritzer & Bergmark, 1997).

In May 1948, the powerful White teachers association, the Georgia Education Association (GEA), with its president J. G. Garrison, circulated throughout Georgia an illustrated pamphlet entitled "*It's Our Duty to the Children of Georgia*" (Georgia Education Association, 1948, p. 1). The pamphlet, through tradition and design, ignored an analysis of Black schools and teachers entirely, except when there was a need to combine numbers to make the total statistics appear more powerful. Articles and photographs appearing in the pamphlet were of White students and teachers (Georgia Education Association, 1948). The pamphlet maintained that one-third of Georgia's adults had less than six years of schooling; only a quarter had attended high school; and less than 10% attended college. It asserted that Georgia's schools and teachers were substandard. The

pamphlet claimed that Georgia's teachers were teaching forty to sixty children in crude, poorly lit, uncomfortable classrooms in substandard facilities, using worn out textbooks. The GEA contended that more than 6,000 teachers left the teaching profession in 1948 and that persons holding emergency certificates, of which many were only high school graduates, filled 93% of the vacancies. Many of the 22,600 teachers in Georgia had "little or no professional training" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 63).

However, leaders of Black and biracial organizations continued to work toward school equalization in Georgia. By 1948 Blacks could see some improvement in the public school situation that had always favored Whites over Blacks. The struggle had raised the per capita annual expenditure in dollars from $6.98 for Black students and $31.52 for White students in 1930 (when a Black student received only 22.14% of what was spent on a White student's public education) to an average of $74.85 per Black student in 1948—compared to an average of $120.73 per White student during that same year (when a Black student received 62% of what was being spent on a White student's education), thus closing the gap considerably on per dollar amount spent on Black students versus White student in Georgia (Bullock, 1967; O'Brien, 1999). These abject discrepancies that showed the poor conditions of Black schools and the fact that they were lagging far behind White schools motivated Grace Hamilton, executive secretary of the Atlanta Urban League, to "lead in the state with a petition

campaign, which demanded parity in facilities, per pupil expenditures, and teacher salaries" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 62; Spritzer & Bergmark, 1997, p. 103).

In 1949, the Georgia Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) estimated that White public school property was valued at $136 million, while Black school property was valued at $22 million. On average, Georgians spent $80 per year on each Black student and $145 per year on each White student. During that same year (1949), African American teachers, who averaged $646 per year in pay, taught classes that had an average of 34 pupils. At the same time, White teachers, who averaged $843 annually, taught classes with an average of 27 pupils (Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1953; O'Brien, 1999).

The Courts and the Private School Plan. During the decade of the 1940s, the NAACP brought a variety of federal lawsuits against several school systems to rectify unequal education in Georgia. Governor Talmadge openly blamed the "northern agitators" for trying to move Black children into White schools and promised, "Georgia would fight this dastardly effort with all the strength and resources we have" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 68; "Talmadge Attacks Negro School Suit," 1949, p. 5).

In spite of the 1950 U. S. Supreme Court decisions in two critical cases, *Sweatt v. Painter (1950)* and *McLaurin v. Oklahoma (1950)*, (which essentially required "substantially equal" schools and facilities for White and Black children), the White community had not been motivated to equalize education for Blacks (Harlan, 1969). Throughout the separate-but-equal era, Whites who were put in

charge of schooling Georgia's children failed to provide equal school facilities for Black children. In 1951, State School Superintendent M. D. Collins estimated that it would cost 100 million dollars to equalize Black schools in Georgia.

Charles Harper, head of Georgia's Black teachers association, the Georgia Teachers and Education Association (GTEA), was extremely concerned and clearly expressed his views about the relationship between the Supreme Court decisions regarding equalizing and segregating Georgia's schools. He claimed "The State will have to provide equality or integrate Negroes into White schools" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 69). George Mitchell, the director of the Southern Regional Council (SRC), based in Atlanta, Georgia, declared that it was "the South's duty to provide equality" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 69; "Talmadge Defiant," 1950, p. 19). However, remarks such as these coming from the SRC and the Black community had little influence in Georgia, where political power was in the hands of the White rural county elites (Key, 1949). Herman Talmadge of Georgia shouted in defiance, "The line is drawn. The threats that have been held over the head of the South for four years are now pointed like a dagger ready to be plunged into the very heart of Southern tradition" ("Talmadge Defiant," 1950, p. 19).

The U. S. Supreme Court decision, *Sweatt v. Painter*, a 1950 case in which the Court ruled that Herman Sweatt must be admitted to the University of Texas Law School, sparked these strong racist and hate-filled remarks by Governor Herman Talmadge, making him the first southern governor to react to the high court's ruling. Talmadge shouted defiance and vowed, "As long as I am Governor,

Negroes will not be admitted to White schools" ("Talmadge Defiant," 1950, p. 19).

At the same time, during the 1950 state Democratic Convention held in Augusta, Georgia, state floor leader Roy Harris vowed that even if the decisions by the high courts were binding, state leaders in Georgia "will go to jail before they will let Negroes and Whites go to school together" (St. John, 1950, p. 1, 8). Delegates of the convention unanimously approved a resolution that pledged all state officials "to preserve racial segregation in the schools and colleges (court) decisions to the contrary notwithstanding" (St. John, 1950, p. 1). Harris clearly intended at any cost to defy the decisions regarding desegregation of Georgia's schools. In fact, Georgia's resistance policy to equality for Blacks in education was born out of the 1950 State Democratic Convention that proved to saturate and spread politics throughout Georgia for the next decade.

The majority of Georgia's most powerful politicians solidly agreed with the Democratic Convention platform. However, a small number of leaders responded negatively to the resolution to defy the law of the land. One outspoken critic of the powerful Georgia racists was a native Georgian by the name of Abraham Conger. Conger was a federal district court judge from the Middle District of Georgia. Judge Conger was inflamed by the delegates' audacity in defying the highest court in the land. Congers declared that such actions by a small group of men "willed by prejudice, inebriated by power, and blinded by egotism" ("A Conservative Georgian Speaks Truth," 1950, p. 18) would lead to anarchy. Clearly angry, Judge

Conger, though a segregationist, called the resolution "a sputum of a negligible, vicious, vociferous, selfish few who thrive and prosper upon turmoil, strife, confusion, hate, prejudice, and intolerance" ("A Conservative Georgian Speaks Truth," 1950, p. 18).

Clearly, Judge Conger, a key player in many activities that shaped Georgia's educational system, was a segregationist and was sympathetic to the segregationist argument. Yet, he believed in the authority of the law, to which he felt all should comply. Judge Conger died in 1954 and did not live to see the *Brown* decision handed down. Interestingly, his replacement on the federal bench on May 18, 1954, one day after *Brown*, was Judge W. A. Bootle, an individual who would play a major role in the implementation of *Brown* in Georgia ("Senate okay Gus Bootle," 1954, p. 7).

On September 19, 1950, the highly broadcasted Federal Court case known as *Aaron v. Cook (1950)* was filed in Atlanta against the Atlanta School Board. The Atlanta Chapter of the NAACP filed the federal suit on behalf of 200 Black school children and their parents. The suit alleged that educational opportunities afforded Black students were not comparable to those offered White students. It also alleged that Black children could only obtain educational advantages, opportunities, and facilities equal to those afforded White children by being allowed to attend the elementary and secondary schools "which defendants are now unlawfully and illegally maintaining and operating exclusively for White children" (*Aaron v. Cook, 1950,* p. 7). Herman Talmadge vowed to "fight the suit

with all his powers" (Goodwin, 1950, p. 1; "Negro Suit Laid To Talmadge Foes," 1950, p. 2). He vowed to throw the full resources of the State government behind the Atlanta Board of Education to fight the Federal lawsuit seeking to end segregation in Atlanta's schools and promised the Board would get all the help it needed to fight the Negroes. Governor Talmadge declared: "Ten years ago my late father, Eugene Talmadge, attempted to warn the people of Georgia what was coming" ("Talmadge to Fight Negro School Suit," 1950, p. 1).

General White reaction to the Atlanta suit was very critical. Many Whites were irate and many Blacks expressed reservations about the suit. White segregationists certainly did not want Blacks attending the same schools as Whites. Many Blacks were fearful because they were well aware of the strong opposition to "race mixing" and the violent consequences such as lynchings, beatings, and other violent attacks on Blacks by the Ku Klux Klan. Governor Talmadge was disappointed and angry claiming "integration would result in confusion, disorder, riots, and anything [*sic*] since the War Between the States." (O'Brien, 1999, p. 79) Former Georgia House Speaker Roy Harris's reactions to the suit were most vehement against those he believed were encouraging social justice for Black people and for the education of Blacks.

Harris predicted in an article placed in the Augusta Courier that: (a) Whites and industry would leave the city and state to avoid intermingling with Blacks, and (b) Whites in Georgia would stop taxing themselves for public education and place their children in private schools (O'Brien, 1999). Roy Harris wrote:

> Why should we pay 40 to 50 million dollars every year to destroy the White race in Georgia? The [MFPE] (Minimum Foundation Program of Education) is designed to furnish adequate and proper educational facilities and opportunities for Whites and Blacks in Georgia. It was designed in part to guarantee to the Negroes eventually equal school facilities and equal opportunities for education and training. Why should the White people...pay exorbitant millions every year in taxes for the sole purpose of destroying the White race in Georgia...The Negroes pay less than 3 percent of the cost of public schools. The Whites pay more than 94 percent. If the public school system is to mean the destruction of the pattern of segregation then we ought to do away with the public school system and devise another to take its place. We could establish some type of private school system in this state whereby the White people...could take 97 percent and create a real system of education for all White people of this state...If the Negroes have sense enough to work with us in the construction of separate but equal school facilities then we should go ahead with rapid progress to finance a real system of education for both races...Were it not for the efforts of White people...the Negro would still be a naked savage in the jungles of Africa. If the Negro is not willing to live with us under the pattern of segregation then we should change our plans for levying millions of dollars of taxes on our necks as [sic] to be used...for destroying everything on the earth the White man holds sacred in race relations. (Harris, 1950, p. 1)

Roy Harris's angry editorial gave rise to the idea of a private school plan and proved to be a significant step in continued crystallization of White resistance to non-segregated public schooling. His whole notion now was to abolish public schooling, as it existed. Harris's unusual and different idea regarding schooling in Georgia attracted considerable attention. On October 3, 1950, the *New York Times* reported Harris's anti-segregation plan, which was the first of its kind in the nation.

Harris, often called the political power behind Governor Herman Talmadge, favored implementing a private Georgia school system for white children. He

predicted that if Negroes won their suit against the Atlanta public school system to abolish segregated schools "the White population would leave the Georgia capital, new business would turn elsewhere, and Harlem in Georgia" ("Private school system urged in Georgia," 1950, p. 24). He insisted on setting up a private school system for Whites, should Negro leaders "continue their foolish program of destroying both the White and Negro races" ("Private school system urged in Georgia," 1950, p. 24).

Though Harris was a power figure in Georgia to reckon with, Georgia's Black leaders spoke up to confirm the importance and necessity of *Aaron v. Cook*, 1950. Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, Morehouse College President and future member of the board of directors of the national chapter of the NAACP, maintained that the court's actions supporting integration of the schools were timely and correct. For Dr. Mays and perhaps for many other Blacks advocating desegregation, obtaining an adequate education at public expense for Black children was at the heart and soul of integration. "The goal of the early struggle orchestrated by African Americans in Georgia, and elsewhere, was neither to make society color-blind, nor for that matter color-conscious, but rather, the goal for African Americans was to gain freedom and justice for people of color" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 83). In 1952, the private school plan in Georgia was no further along than it had been in May 1951. Eventually, the case of *Aaron v. Cook* was consolidated with another case in South Carolina and ultimately dismissed for lack of prosecution in 1956.

The highly publicized U.S. Supreme Court case involving five school segregation cases filed as a class action lawsuit in 1952 by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund Chief, Thurgood Marshall, and which later became known as *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), essentially abrogated the Plessy separate-but-equal doctrine. Georgia, among other southern states, indicated that it would find ways to legally defy the *Brown* decision. The most aggressive stance of defiance came from Georgia's Herman Talmadge. Talmadge took the lead in the fight to defy *Brown*. He declared that the Supreme Court Justices had insulted the Georgia Constitution and reduced it to a "mere scrap of paper" (Kluger, 1977).

Talmadge made his position clear on the issue of non-segregated public schools and private schools in Georgia. Regarding the United States Supreme Court's decision on segregation in private schools, Talmadge called for Georgians to remain calm claiming "Georgians cannot and will not accept a bold political decree without basis in law or practicality which overturns their accepted pattern of life" (St. John, 1954, pp. 1, 9). He claimed that the Georgia Constitution provides for separation of the races and that it will be upheld. He further stated, "Georgians accept the challenge and will not tolerate the mixing of the races in public schools, or any other public tax-supported institutions. The fact that the high tribunal has seen fit to proclaim its views on sociology as law will make no difference" (St. John, 1954, p. 9).

As the 1954 decision of *Brown* required schools to remove the race barrier across the U.S., Georgia's political and educational leaders never deviated from

the separate education program and accelerated the building of an officially segregated system. For years after the Brown decision, Georgia maintained its separate "Division of Negro Education" and continued to compile and keep separate statistics for White and Black schools. Additionally, the state's reports continued to indicate that Georgia's common schools were officially separate and unequally funded. White politicians and school officials maintained the unlawful segregated system with a sense of arrogant self-righteousness (O'Brien, 1999).

In 1955, all of the gubernatorial candidates in Georgia used race and school segregation, together with the private school plan, to distinguish themselves in the race to become Georgia's next governor. Georgia's Agriculture Commissioner, Tom Linder, expressed, "We are going to have segregation in Georgia. No ruling they can make will stop it" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 105). However, he later modified his position and took a somewhat softer approach to the problem of segregated schools by favoring parental choice on whether to send their children to segregated or racially mixed schools. Lieutenant Governor S. Marvin Griffin, who won the office for Governor, campaigned using the strongest statements against desegregation. Griffin was the only candidate who favored the private school plan. He blasted the high court's ruling, which declared segregation of public schools unconstitutional by boasting:

> It is certainly unfortunate that the Supreme Court saw fit to declare segregation in our schools unconstitutional. However, I am not surprised, as the meddlers, demagogues, race-baiters and communists in the United States are determined to destroy every vestige of states rights. The Constitution of the Sovereign State of

> Georgia provides for segregation in the schools of this state. ("Candidates Renew Vow," 1954, p. 1)

He declared, "As long as I am your public servant, I will maintain segregation in the schools of Georgia and the races will not be mixed, come hell or high water" ("Candidates Renew Vow," 1954, p. 10).

Other Georgia elites found potential problems with the private school amendment, which had received a 13-3 favorable vote by the Georgia Commission on Education (GCE) in a meeting that Governor Talmadge called in September 1954. Roy Harris foresaw serious legal problems with the private school plan. He questioned whether a private school supported by public funds would legally constitute a private school. He feared that the U.S. Supreme Court would not distinguish between a public school system and a private school system funded with public funds (Leflar & Davis, 1954). Harris suggested that the only way to guarantee segregation was to physically intimidate Blacks that tried to attend school with Whites. Harris opposed the report because he believed that it nullified the weapon the state had to tell Georgia's students, "There will be no schools unless they are segregated" ("Georgia," 1954, p. 10; "Talmadge-Appointed Group Endorses Private School Plan," 1954, p. 1). Harris further contended, "Closing of the schools because of integration would so arouse White people that Negroes would not dare defy the solid front of Whites" ("Georgia," 1954, p. 10). However, at this time, the new Georgia private school plan was not a viable

alternative educational plan as it had no comprehensive design and no formulated plan of action for educating Georgia's 800,000 school children (O'Brien, 1999).

Georgia's powerful politicians, including the State Democratic Party, supported the amendment for a private school system in Georgia. Talmadge, Griffin and their supporters toured the state speaking on behalf of the private school amendment. Talmadge appeared several times on television to argue for the adoption of the private school act ("Talmadge, Griffin to go on TV," 1954; "Talmadge to Cover Georgia," 1954). The issue of a private school system to foster segregated schools was a vehemently contested battle in Georgia. Right up to the day to vote on the matter, pro and anti-private school advocates debated in schools, churches, and on the radio and television almost nightly. Politicians and other Georgia leaders were split over the issue and no one could predict a clear winner prior to the vote.

On November 2, 1954, the voters of Georgia went to the polls and voted in favor of the private school amendment by a vote of 210,488 to 181,148 (Mackay, 1958). The Talmadge machine, which included Governor-elect Griffin, presented the private school plan to the voters as the only way to maintain a system of common schools and segregation. Governor-elect Griffin promised Georgia that there would be no legislation in the 1955 legislative session that would give legal power to the high court's decision on *Brown*. Except for one bill that made it a felony for any official to spend money on mixed schools, Griffin kept his word about the 1995 legislative session (Mackay, 1958).

Many Georgia moderates, including the NAACP's Chief Council, Thurgood Marshall, underestimated the extent to which Georgia's White power brokers, politicians, and local school officials would cling to the state's system of Jim Crow laws (Raymond, 1954). Though the high court made its renowned 1954 decision in the *Brown* case, which declared separate educational facilities inherently unequal and unconstitutional, it had postponed its decree on how implementation of desegregation would take place. By the middle of 1955, Georgia braced for the Supreme Court's postponed decree on how *Brown* was to be implemented.

The Court required only that states make a "prompt and reasonable start" (Woodward, 1966, p. 153) toward complying with its decision. The high court decision, known as *Brown II, 1955*, did not set a fixed date for school desegregation. It simply remanded such cases to lower courts and instructed these courts to require local school boards to make a "prompt and reasonable start toward full compliance," (Brown *v.* Board of Education, 349 US 294, 1955) and to proceed "with all deliberate speed" (Brown *v.* Board of Education, 349 US 294, 1955) toward attainment of unitary school systems (Brown *v.* Board of Education, 349 US 294, 1955; Franklin & Moss, 1994; Woodward, 1966, p. 153). This came as a relief to the White leadership of Georgia.

This lenient view gave fresh hope to Georgia's segregationists. The state could now place its hopes in the district judges, many of whom were judged southerners and sat on the bench within their home state. No one voiced this hope

more explicitly than Governor Ernest Vandiver who was the Lieutenant Governor of Georgia at the time, who rejoiced that, "They are steeped in the same traditions that I am... A 'reasonable time' can be construed as one year or two hundred. ...Thank God we've got good federal judges" (Woodward, 1966, p. 153). In spite of the Supreme Court's order, very little desegregation took place over the next decade. While some of the decisions took a lenient position regarding the amount of time required to fully implement desegregation within schools, others stressed moving the process forward more rapidly. Supreme Court Justice Hugo L. Black stated, "There has been too much deliberation and not enough speed" (Moore & Moore, 1997, p. 40).

Delays in implementing desegregation provided time to strategize on ways to save segregation as an institution as long as possible. Georgia along with some other southern states adopted the "null and void" approach, and added a strongly worded declaration that it would ignore the Supreme Court decision (Woodward, 1966). Georgia also made it a "felony for any school official of the state or any municipal or county schools to spend tax money for public schools in which the races are mixed" (Woodward, 1966, p. 157). C. Vann Woodward wrote regarding the school and race situation of 1966:

> All over the South the lights of reason and tolerance and moderation began to go out under the resistance demand for conformity...a fever of rebellion and a malaise of fear spread over the region...Words began to shift their significance and lose their common meaning. A "moderate" became a man who dared open his mouth, an "extremist" one who favored eventual compliance with the law, and "compliance" took on the connotations of treason. Politicians who

> once had spoken for moderation began to vie with each other in defiance of the federal government. (O'Brien, 1999, p. 115)

Black leadership in Georgia sanctioned *Brown II* with less optimism than had previously welcomed *Brown I* in 1954. One outspoken Black leader and educator, Joseph W. Holley, the aging founder and President Emeritus of Albany State College, continued his support for segregation and segregated common schools. Holley believed in White cultural superiority, and warned that unless Blacks put aside plans of a liberal education and learn "to work with our hands as well as with our heads, we shall remain the economic bondsmen we were in our father's time" (Holley, 1955, p. 22). Dr. Holley wrote, "There is, truly, a place for the arts, a time for equality, a season for the trappings and embellishments that many of us love so well" (Holley, 1955, p. 22). He also wrote, "But equality must come from within, and the time is not now ripe" (Holley, 1955, p. 22). He linked desegregation at the common school level to communism. For Dr. Holley, the *Brown II* decree to desegregate all public education "with all deliberate speed" (Holley, 1955, p. 22) was just too much too fast. While Holley favored a softer and more conservative approach to school desegregation, mainstream Black leaders continued intense efforts for desegregation.

The Atlanta Board of Education acted quickly when it received a petition calling for desegregation of its schools in June of 1955. The Board hastily appointed a committee to study the desegregation issue. Acting on the advice of State Attorney General Eugene Cook, the Board approved the study committee's

resolution. The resolution stated that the school board was subject to the mandates of all laws and authorities, and would have to do whatever it could to preserve the system of segregation until federal and state lawmakers could resolve the legal differences. The resolution further provided for Atlanta School Superintendent, Ira Jarrell, to make studies on a variety of issues such as the relationship between race and I.Q., race and average educational training, race and achievement, the impact of integration on the preservation of safety and order, the ability of Blacks to teach Whites, and the impact of integration on extracurricular activities.

Former Governor Herman E. Talmadge led the fight for a segregated Georgia, including its schools. He appeared on his weekly television show, which he devoted to discussions on maintaining segregation. Talmadge also continued to communicate his segregationist views to the people of Georgia through his writings in *The Statesman*, a weekly newspaper that he published. In October 1955, he published his first book entitled *Segregation and You*. The book is primarily a collection of his states' rights and pro-segregation arguments (Talmadge, 1955).

In the Fall of 1955, Georgia's State Attorney General Eugene Cook launched a state-financed campaign that, according to George Mitchell, executive director of the Southern Regional Council (SRC), was initiated to stamp out all "independent thought, and stifle all dissent with respect to school segregation" (Mitchell, 1955, Series 1, Reel 35). Another scholar noted that Attorney General Cook specifically attacked Black teachers who were well represented in the

NAACP. He advised local school superintendents to view the records and to fire teachers who held membership in the NAACP. In fact, Cook's defiant attacks on the NAACP had a major impact on the organization's ability to effect change (Bolster, 1972). Educational leaders in Georgia fought relentlessly in their battle to keep Black teachers and students in a separate and dispossessed educational environment. In August 1955, the Georgia Board of Education passed a resolution to revoke "forever" the license of any teacher who advocated desegregation. Later, however, the Board revised the policy and required only that teachers sign a pledge to "uphold, support, and defend the constitution and the laws of Georgia" (Bartley, 1969, p. 111).

> Governor Marvin Griffin, with the issue of "segregation" as his gubernatorial platform, continued to vehemently press Georgians to maintain segregated schools. Governor Griffin proclaimed, in response to *Brown II*, that Georgians would not accept desegregation "no matter how much the court seeks to sugar coat its bitter pill of tyranny…we know it is the Supreme Court that has departed from the Constitution and the law, not us." (Wesberry, 1955, p. 798)

In 1955, Governor Griffin and two hundred state political leaders sponsored a massive resistance meeting at the Biltmore Hotel and declared their defiance and willingness to defend the Georgia way of life (i.e., segregation and White supremacy), vowing to fight to the bitter end ("An unofficial timeline of educational event," Online, 2004). Griffin declared that the private school plan was Georgia's "first, last and only absolute remedy" (Griffin, 1956, p. 2) for providing segregated schools within the terms of the U. S. Supreme Court decision. Griffin's legislators pushed through committee the private school plan

legislation. During the 1956 General Assembly, Governor Griffin introduced a resolution for "interposition" (Griffin, 1956, p.1), which declared the 13th and 14th amendments to the U. S. Constitution null and void. The Georgia Assembly received this resolution with rousing applause. The legislature adopted Griffin's proposed resolution for Interposition and formally approved the private school bills. That same day, Governor Marvin Griffin signed six bills into law. Effectively, these bills provided the tooling necessary for conversion of Georgia's public schools to private schools. Durwood Pye, head of Georgia's Commission on Education Office, was one of the chief architects of these and other massive resistance laws designed to maintain segregated schools in Georgia (Mackay, 1958; O'Brien, 1999).

The Sinister Seven and the Public School Declaration

James A. MacKay, a member of the Georgia General Assembly in 1956, recalled in a 1991 interview that *Act* 11 was perhaps the most important of the six private school plan bills the Governor signed (O'Brien, 1999). It required the closing of public schools in the event of a decree ordering desegregation and provided for tuition grants for White students in an amount to be determined by the governor. Additionally, *Act* 11 provided for state and local taxes to be collected as necessary to accomplish a transition to a private school system in Georgia. In an effort to avoid involving state money with the church, *Act* 11 made it a misdemeanor for a parent to use the tuition grant to send a child to a sectarian school. (Mackay interview, November 26, 1991, as cited in O'Brien, 1999).

Except for a very small number of politicians, the vast majority (nearly unanimous) of Georgia's legislators lined up behind the Governor's *segregation now and forever* movement. Most legislators were so hardened by efforts to keep segregation, including segregated schools, alive in Georgia that, as a show of solidarity in the fight to preserve segregation, they enthusiastically added the Confederate *Stars and Bars* to the Georgia state flag and renamed it *The Battle Flag of the Confederacy* (Georgia Laws, 1956, p. 38). A very small number of politicians resisted the Griffin segregation plan. Seven moderate members of the General Assembly known as the *Sinister Seven* (O'Brien, 1999) and led by James A. Mackay and Hamilton Lokey openly opposed the private school amendment of 1954. After casting their votes in opposition to the plan, the Sinister Seven issued the *Public School Declaration*. Coauthored by Lokey and Mackay, the Declaration stated:

> We believe in the public schools of Georgia. They are our greatest asset. The work of Georgians for seventy-five years and the expenditure of hundreds and millions of dollars in public funds have made our schools what they are today. Our children now have educational opportunities comparable to those of children in other parts of the United States. We believe that every boy and girl and every parent and every Georgian has a stake in the preservation and strengthening of our public school. We believe that anything that harms the public schools does irreparable harm to the future of our children and our state. Believing these things, we cannot support legislation, which would: 1. Destroy our public schools. 2. Place in the hands of one man, whoever he might be, unlimited power to shut down our public schools and dole out our school money. 3. Provide for the lease, sale, transfer or other disposition of public school properties without statutory safeguards to protect the public interest or provide who will get our schools and on what terms, and without any provisions whatsoever for the welfare or future of our teachers

> other than retirement pay. 4. Substitute for our present accredited public schools a grant of money to be applied toward an education of unknown quality in unspecified locations, for an uncertain school year, with no required academic standards and with no provision for building maintenance other than fire safety. 5. Deny the right of peaceful assembly, petition, or open discussion relative to the school problem. We believe in our traditional way of life, but we must find a solution to our present school crisis consistent with this declaration of principles. Lokey and Mackay's Public School Declaration. (as cited in O'Brien, 1999, p. 122)

The Public School Declaration by Lokey and Mackay was the first clear opposition in Georgia of the moderate position regarding the issue of closing any of Georgia's public schools. The Declaration's endorsement of public education eventually proved critical to moderates and provided an opportunity for them to unite against the school closing provision of the private school plan and its massive resistance to desegregated schools in Georgia. However, the Declaration stopped short of addressing the issue of segregated schools and as a result did not provide any practical solutions for the more fundamental goal of providing equal educational opportunity and open access for Black teachers and students.

Education Problems Continue Through the 1950s

Throughout the late 1940s and mid-1950s, a number of Black and biracial organizations continued the struggle in support of the public school system in Georgia. The head of the Georgia Committee on Interracial Cooperation (GCIC), and former President of Georgia State College for Women in Milledgeville, Guy H. Wells, who was also a strong adversary of the segregation movement in Georgia, hosted several biracial meetings of Georgia educators at his home in

Milledgeville in an effort to exchange facts and ideas about the educational problems in Georgia. Although he endured a cross burning in his front yard, he did not alter his conviction that biracial action was necessary in solving the educational problems in Georgia. Wells bypassed the state politicians and went directly to the people of Georgia urging local communities to comply with the high court's decision in the *Brown* case. He and other members of the GCIA impelled the "White and Black community to come together and plan the wisest manner to proceed" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 123) in accommodating the ruling that separate school facilities were inherently unequal. It is believed that the actions of Wells may have influenced the state board of the PTA in June 1954 to decide to support desegregation of public schools (Bolster, 1972; O'Brien, 1999).

In 1956, at its annual meeting, Georgia's Black teachers association, the GTEA, went on record as opposing the new private school plan and passed a resolution calling for fair play and good will and for desegregation of public schools in Georgia. Although the GTEA could do little else to support *Brown*, its actions cast solidarity among Black teachers and countered White assertions that Blacks did not desire desegregation (Sarratt, 1966). This was a bold move on the part of the GTEA. It was widely known that perhaps Black teachers would lose the most if public schools desegregated (Tushnet, 1987). The chances were great that White teachers would be hired before Black teachers in a desegregated school system. In fact, research indicated later that the first several years of desegregation did have a devastating effect on the number of Black teachers in the seventeen

Southern and Border States. During the first eleven-year period alone, more than 30,000 Black teachers lost their jobs (Foster, 1997). A task force of the National Education Association in its attempt to explain the wholesale dismissal of Black teachers reasoned:

> It is clear that in the past, Negro teachers were employed specifically and exclusively for the purpose of teaching Negro pupils in segregated schools. Segregated schools required segregated facilities. Since Negro teachers were employed to teach Negro pupils, there were relatively few positions for Negro teachers in a school system with few classes for Negroes. In a system with no classes for Negroes, there were simply no positions for Negro teachers. It has been, and still is, widely assumed by many school board members that Negroes, both students and teachers, are intellectually inferior. From this specious premise, it follows that "quality education" can be obtained only when schools, even after being integrated, remain in spirit and often in name "White schools." White schools are viewed as having no place for Negro teachers. (Foster, 1997, p. xxxviii)

Also, desegregation of schools diminished Black teachers' influence and leadership role in the Black community (Foster, 1997).

Although the NAACP, liberals, and moderates fought hard to integrate Georgia's schools and other facilities, in 1956, the Talmadge-Griffin forces ruled Georgia. The General Assembly was so defiant that it passed additional resistance measures, including a law forfeiting the retirement benefits of peace officers who failed to enforce segregation and a law defining the duties of state law officers regarding school segregation laws. The White supremacist organization known as the States' Rights Council of Georgia (SRCG), held its first meeting in Atlanta, Georgia in 1955. However, the SRCG never initiated any vigorous campaigns to further its cause in keeping Georgia and its school systems segregated (Wilhoit,

1973). In spite of the high profile dedicated segregationists, including former Governor Herman Talmadge, Governor Marvin Griffin, political boss Roy Harris, and Attorney General Eugene Cook, popular support for the SRCG was weak (McMillen, 1971).

A few months after *Brown II*, Georgia's most influential political power broker, Roy C. Harris, gradually began to weaken as a political boss. He became obsessed with segregation and the preservation of White supremacy and purity. Weekly, he used his newspaper to race-bait, harshly criticize anyone or any organization that publicly or privately supported desegregation in Georgia. The *Brown II* decision created a sense of urgency among the Ku Klux Klan, however, the Klan was slow to organize in Georgia and did not reach its peak in Georgia until late 1956, 1957, and 1958 (Sarratt, 1966). During the post-*Brown* period, the Klan was responsible for many notorious bombings, beatings, murders, cross burnings, and hooded marches, all in the name of "Segregation in Georgia" (Bartley, 1969, p. 206).

Although the many acts of violence and intimidation carried out by the Klan terrified minority groups, these actions did not attract wide-base support from the White majority. Most status-conscious politicians as well as other community elites in Georgia, even those who were comfortable with the Jim Crow system, distanced themselves from the violence and nighttime intimidation activities associated with the Klan (Bartley, 1969).

After violent defiance to desegregation during the late fifties and early sixties throughout the South and in Georgia, the resistance movement decided to use more subtle forms of defiance in opposition to school integration. Delay and evasion tactics included *White flight*, which is a systematic rezoning of Whites out of racially mixed school districts, intimidating Black children who planned to attend White schools, and opening a number of all-White private schools, many of which were opened under the guise of church schools (Bartley, 1969). Such cunning tactics by those who wanted to maintain segregated schools in Georgia reduced court ordered desegregation to token integration at best. During the 1964-1965 school year (the year I graduated high school in Albany, Georgia), only 2.25% of the South's Black children attended schools with White children ("Bitter End," 1964; "More Speed, Less Deliberation," 1964; "Integration Takes Hold," 1965).

The reinforcing of the private school plan during the 1956 session of the Georgia General Assembly by the Griffin-Talmadge political machine served notice to all of Georgia that its politically powerful were willing to prolong the fight for a segregated school system in Georgia. During the 1957 session of the Georgia General Assembly, state legislators continued to work skillfully to maneuver around the Supreme Court's rulings against school segregation by race. The General Assembly empowered the governor with authority to abolish compulsory school attendance laws and to suppress violence at his discretion. It further passed a bill that protected the retirement benefits of White teachers in the

event they transferred from public integrated schools to private segregated schools.

The General Assembly also extended the powers of the Georgia Commission on Education (GCE) by giving it authority to express pro-segregation views through the distribution of pamphlets, advertisement campaigns, and through electronic media. The legislators authorized the agency (GCE) to hold hearings, subpoena witnesses, and to investigate any activity or instances that disgrace, dishonor, or otherwise raised any objection to the state's position on segregation. The lawmakers allocated $376,000 for the agency to achieve the mandates authorized by the General Assembly. Also during this legislative session (1957), Georgia's lawmakers passed another resolution calling for the impeachment of six U.S. Supreme Court justices (Sarratt, 1966).

Lawmakers provided the GCE with powers designed to intimidate the opposition. The authority and funds granted to the GCE by Georgia's lawmakers made it a well-funded, pro-segregation, state propaganda machine with powers to hire private detectives to investigate possible violations of the state's segregation laws. At one point during this time, Roy Harris's States' Rights Council adopted an absurd plan sponsored by State Representative A. A. Fowler from Douglasville that would move Black families from Georgia into predominantly White neighborhoods in other sections of the country. This plan sought to give the non-South a sample of the Southern Way of Life, by literally exporting the race problem and reducing the number of Blacks in Georgia. The States' Rights

Council, under the direction of Harris, chartered this plan as the "American Resettlement Foundation" ("Georgia Vote Registration Drive, Tight Laws Mapped," 1957, p. 13; "Segregation Leaders Confer in Georgia on Tightening vote Requirement," 1957, p. 9).

Under Governor Griffin, the massive resistance to school desegregation and integration of the races in Georgia had reached maturity. The private school plan had been rewritten by the lawmakers to contain more stringent restrictions on school integration and Governor Griffin led the state in measures to suppress and intimidate Black opposition and to gag White moderates and liberals who spoke out against the segregationists' point of view. The total effect was an atmosphere in which Black opposition was not only attacked, but also one where any diversity of opinion was unacceptable. By the end of 1957, massive resistance to school desegregation and racial integration in Georgia had reached its prime. Efforts by Black and biracial movements to integrate elementary and secondary schools in Georgia had stalled. Public schools in Georgia were still racially segregated (O'Brien, 1999).

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act eventually became the government's most used and most effective means of enforcing desegregation in Georgia; however, it had little effect until government agencies became more strict in applying its terms and conditions to public schools (Formwalt and Williams, 1997; Moore and Moore, 1997). In fact, it was not until 1967 that the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court ordered Georgia and other southern states to integrate faculties, as well as

students, and further stated: "It is not enough for school authorities to offer Negro children the opportunity to attend formerly all-White schools" ("The South is Told Now," 1967, p. 11). Between 1967 and 1968, only 14% of Black students attended integrated schools, a number which only increased to 18% by 1969 (Formwalt & Williams, 1997; Rilling, 1970).

On September 23, 1957, in a highly publicized school desegregation incident involving Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, President Dwight D. Eisenhower federalized the National Guard and sent in the 101st Airborne Division to escort nine Black students into the school to permanently desegregate it. This act sent a telling message to the defiant leadership in Georgia.

On August 22, 1957, prior to the "Little Rock Nine" incident at Central High School, Governor Marvin Griffin and Georgia's political boss Roy Harris flew to Little Rock, met with leaders at a Citizens' Council meeting and called upon Arkansas to join with Georgia in defense of segregation. They had no idea that President Eisenhower himself would finally act and act swiftly on the school segregation issue (Bartley, 1983).

The Little Rock incident proved to be a wake-up call for Georgia's political leaders who had rallied behind the policy of massive resistance. Suddenly, it became clear that the federal government would not tolerate defiance of Federal Court orders to begin desegregation of southern schools. Eisenhower's actions in the Little Rock episode sent a message that southern states would either accept the *Brown* decision by the high court and implement desegregation in public schools,

or get out of the education business. White Georgians now understood that if confronted with a similar desegregation suit, a choice would have to be made between public schools and segregation. Black Georgians understood that they would have to find a way to bring compliance with *Brown* without putting at risk a public school system that was improving, although it was still separate and still unequal. Now Georgia, like other southern states, would have to weigh its commitment to segregation against its commitment to public education (O'Brien, 1999).

As 1957 drew to a close, Roy Harris was going full speed in Georgia. He was a member of the Board of Regents, president-elect of the States' Rights Council of Georgia (SRCG), and would soon be president of the Citizens' Council of America, a national federation that directed state and local Citizens' Councils. Harris, using his influence, proposed another scheme to preserve segregation and "save the public schools of Georgia" ("Harris Tells Plan," 1957, p. 13). Under his new plan, state and local authorities would cut off all money to school systems that desegregated. He believed that when this happened local citizens would set up a corporation to run private schools, thus saving public schools in counties where no attempts were made to desegregate, and abolishing public schools in large cities in Georgia such as Atlanta and Savannah, where litigation was likely ("Harris Tells Plan," 1957).

In September 1957, John A. Griffin, an Emory University Sociology Professor and native Georgian, began teaching a course called the "Editors' View

of the South." It was one of the first courses taught in the state to allow for discussions of the school-race issue in the post-Brown era that fully explored the views of both segregationists and moderates. He invited many newspaper editors and other guest lecturers to speak on race and the schools in Georgia. Sylvan Meyer from the *Gainesville (GA) Times* was one of the guest lecturers. In answering the argument that the Constitution allows states to manage state school systems and to continue segregating by race, Meyer expressed that the "Constitution serves the individual first and foremost," and not the states or the federal government. Responding to the widespread myth that a majority of Blacks throughout the South preferred segregation by race, Meyer said:

> Who knows what the Negro wants? I believe the Negro doesn't even know what he wants, and again I say, it doesn't make any difference what he wants. The question is what he deserves. He deserves a clean set of books, self-respect that can never come to him when the law books of his state set him apart from other Americans. (O'Brien, 1999, p. 143)

Professor Griffin's course marked the beginning of dialogue within the White community about the school problem and the race issue in Georgia. The dialogue over time became a major factor in penetrating the wall of massive resistance. The dialogue was advanced by an abhorrence of violence and by a belief in public education. While the dialogue and the propaganda of public education promoted public schools as the ideal of an American democratic meritocracy, society actually embraced and allowed for race separation and class privileging.

Ministers' Manifesto

Several White ministers' groups from various cities around the state drew up "Ministers' Manifestos" ("Georgia Vote Registration Drive, Tight Laws Mapped," 1957, p. 13; "Ministers' Manifesto Gains," 1957, p. 2) and other declarations, which advanced community action and dialogue on race relations and the survival of Georgia's public schools.

In Atlanta, 80 ministers signed their manifesto of personal opinions on the race issue, which sparked a continuing discussion of the duty of Christians, politicians, and others who preferred law and order as opposed to violence and mob rule. All over America the simple principles of the "Ministers' Manifesto" presented by the 80 Atlanta ministers were being reprinted and repeated ("Georgia Vote Registration Drive, Tight Laws Mapped," 1957, p. 13; "Ministers' Manifesto Gains," 1957, p. 2). Soon the issue of public schools versus hastily organized quasi-private schools became a debatable issue in the White community. The strength of the argument for public education ultimately penetrated the hard-core White resistance opinions and brought about token desegregation in Georgia.

In 1958, the gubernatorial race in Georgia featured a new candidate for the governorship of Georgia; Governor Marvin Griffin's Lieutenant Governor, S. Ernest Vandiver, running against Reverend William T. Bodenhamer, a Baptist minister and staunch segregationist. While campaigning for the Governor's office in May 1958, Vandiver resorted to the

usual race rhetoric of his predecessors by declaring, "There is not enough money in the federal treasury to force us to mix the races in the classrooms of Georgia" ("Way cleared for hearing," 1958, p. 3). However, it was Bodenhamer's accusation that Vandiver was "weak on segregation" ("Way cleared for hearing," 1958, p. 3) that led to Vandiver infamous campaign pledge, "Neither my child nor yours will ever attend an integrated school during my administration, no not one" (Vandiver, 1988, p. 158). On the following day Vandiver announced that public schools in Georgia would be abandoned before Whites submitted to "judicially enforced integration, at bayonet point, or otherwise" (Black, 1976, p. 68). He further suggested that any attempts to desegregate public schools would be countered by extensive grassroots opposition (Black, 1976).

Vandiver won the bid for governor of Georgia by more than 83% of the popular vote. He carried 156 of Georgia's 159 counties and was sworn into office on January 13, 1959, at age forty. Not swaying from his campaign pledge "no not one," in his inaugural address, he declared that his administration would make continued segregation one of his top priorities. When the new governor was sworn in on January 13, 1959, he vowed before an estimated crowd of 8,500 Georgians that he would preserve racial segregation and would reorganize the government to insure economy and honesty. He assured the people of Georgia that he opposed the county unit system and to "do everything in my power to preserve segregation

in our schools" (Britton, 1959, p. 4), even ruling out any "token integration" (p. 4). He went on to say:

> My friends, we have only just begun to fight...The people of Georgia and their new governor say to the U.S. Supreme Court that we will fight desegregation where ever it raises its ugly head, in these very streets, in every city, in every town, and in every hamlet—until sanity is restored in the land...Georgians are determined to stand by their rights and traditions, whatever the cost. (Britton, 1959, p. 1, 4; Pou, 1959, p. 1, 4)

Crisis in the Schools

Beginning in the fall of 1958, Professor John A. Griffin started another course at Emory University entitled Crisis in the Schools. Again professor Griffin invited many individuals who were known statewide to speak and participate in his course. Leaders of various organizations, which included moderates, and some of Georgia's top segregationists such as former Governor Marvin Griffin and Senator Richard B. Russell, participated in the course and argued their points of view on school and race desegregation.

Dekalb County Representative James Mackay and Assistant Attorney General Robert H. Hall, both having reputations as sharp lawyers, were the first Georgians to participate in Griffin's seminar. Hall contended, as he had done earlier in 1954, an argument that in effect called for serious consideration of the private school plan noting that state law required implementing a private plan and further noting that he believed that the plan would work (Hall, 1954). However, Mackay attacked Hall's adherence to state law and linked the concept of local government control to the school and race issue. He argued that local communities

should govern local schools and the people themselves should decide on the fate of Georgia's public schools, not the state capitol or government leaders in Washington, D. C. Throughout the South, upon being ordered to desegregate under Federal Court orders, southern Governors ordered schools closed pursuant to the private school plan.

During the fall of 1958, outgoing Governor Marvin Griffin, speaking at the Crisis in the Schools course, again stood firm and declared that any attempt to integrate Georgia's schools would meet with "unprecedented resistance." Governor Griffin also reiterated his belief that the *Brown* decision had violated Georgia's "sacred right" to administer its system of public schooling. In his defiance, he stated, "Let's not have any scalawags or political traitors on the segregation question. Let's not play roll over, Rover" (Fort, 1959, p. 12).

The faculty at Emory University were undaunted by the Governor's remarks and on November 30, 1958, 250 of the 335 full-time faculty, in a statement to the press, publicly expressed their opposition to public school closings claiming "irreparable damage" (Fort, 1959, p. 5) would be done if the state followed its policy of implementing a private school system in the event of desegregation. Two weeks later, seventy-three faculty members at Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia, published a petition against closing public schools in Georgia claiming that closing the public schools would be a "great disaster" (Fort, 1959, p. 5) and would contribute to the spread of illiteracy in the state. Following the actions taken by the professors, 419 physicians in the Atlanta area went public

with their own manifesto, urging Georgians to take whatever steps necessary to prevent the closing of the public schools (Shannon, 1958).

School Debate Shifts As Integrationists Become Open School Advocates

While the course of the debate was changing, most White Georgians, including moderates, still preferred segregation and the southern tradition of life. Many Whites condemned the declarations by moderates, which called for continued public education (Bell, 1995). By the latter part of 1958, the segregation debate had public education linked to it as an important factor. History has indicated that race and desegregation became primary issues in the development of public schooling in Georgia. The extent to which this new factor, public education, would influence the outcome of the segregation debate would depend on how well the public school argument was presented by those who would no longer be called "integrationists" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 153) or "Communists" (p. 153) or "nigger-lovers," (p. 153) but rather "open school advocates" (p. 153).

HOPE Founded to Save Public Schools

On December 9, 1958, Muriel Lokey and two other parents, Frances Breeden and Maxine Friedman, started a new movement in a daring new effort to save public schools in Georgia from closing due to segregation. These two women chartered a new organization called Help Our Public Education Inc. (HOPE), a nonprofit parents' group consisting entirely of White parents. This new group sought "to give direction, guidance, information, and program to all citizens of

Georgia who desired to continue operation of the public schools of this state" (Bolster, 1972, p. 152).

The members of HOPE put a simple goal in place for the organization: to keep all public schools open. HOPE strategically restrained from issues of segregation and race, pledging instead to promote the open schools movement (Bolster, 1972). Governor S. Ernest Vandiver was openly critical of HOPE stating, "I have no patience with those who are now coming out in the open and demanding that the races be mixed in the classrooms in the schools of Georgia, contrary to the laws and the constitution of this state" (Bartley, 1983, p. 214). Intolerant and angry with Atlanta's white moderates, Vandiver vehemently lashed out by stating that moderates were "running up the flag of surrender over the capital city and displaying a defeatist spirit" (Bartley, 1983, p. 214).

Governor Vandiver's Six School Desegregation Laws

Governor Vandiver, like the Governors of Georgia before him, was fiercely defiant toward school desegregation. On January 14, 1959, just one day after Governor Vandiver's inauguration, he recommended that Georgia lawmakers pass more stringent school desegregation policies. The Georgia General Assembly, acting on the recommendation of Governor Vandiver, passed six new desegregation laws. These six new policies put into law a practice that governors had been practicing since 1950. Governor Vandiver claimed that the six proposals were based upon a study by the best legal minds in the state in the area of constitutional laws as to how Georgia's social customs might be preserved.

Vandiver's six main administration-sponsored segregation legislative proposals, which became law immediately when he became governor, were:

1. That the governor, as conservator of the peace, be authorized to close a single public school within a system should it be ordered integrated, including the school from which the pupil ordered to integrate came or might normally have attended: *This law was designed for Atlanta, the only public school system in the state facing a desegregation suit. The governor already had the power to close an entire affected school system. The administration wanted this law on the books so that one school in the system ordered integrated could be closed without closing the doors to all of the other Atlanta schools and shutting out all of Atlanta's 107,000 children.* (author comments in italics)
2. That power is given to the governor to close any unit in the University System of Georgia when he deems it necessary to preserve and keep the peace, dignity and good order of the state: *This bill, brought on by the desegregation order issued by the Federal Court's desegregation to Georgia State College, sought to authorize closing a single public college without shutting down all public higher education units. Together the first two gave the governor the authority to close a single public school or a single unit within the state educational system. These two measures were designed to give the Governor the discretionary*

power to block or wipe out desegregation at a particular school site without closing an entire system. (author comments in italics)

3. That establishment of bona fide private schools be facilitated by allowing taxpayers credits upon their state income tax returns for contributions to such institutions which are organized and operated exclusively for educational purposes after such institutions have been certified in accordance with law: *The third measure aided and promoted the private school plan by providing taxpayers tuition tax credits on their payments toward establishing and operating private schools. Sources said a statewide "private school foundation" would be established soon after this bill, which permits deduction of the full amount of state income taxes, passes the Legislature. It was believed outstanding Georgians would be asked to serve as directors and immediately begin to collect funds to serve as an emergency fund before any school crisis developed. However, no private schools would be set up until a public school was ordered to integrate.* (author comments in italics)
4. That age limits are set on enrollees in the University System, except where special dispensation is made: *This bill would bar those over 21 years of age as undergraduates and those over 25 as graduate students in the University System, except in cases of unusual ability or fitness as determined by the state Board of Regents. All Negroes who had*

participated in college level desegregation suits in Georgia so far had been over 21 years old. Off the record, there was some concern by a few individuals that the bill may adversely affect accreditation or prevent older persons from obtaining an education, but the bill received little public opposition. (author comments in italics)

5. That political subdivisions of the state having independent school systems be prohibited from levying ad valorem taxation for the support of mixed schools: *Aimed at Atlanta, this measure had been frankly pushed as an effort to take the power to tax from local public officials willing to integrate schools and essentially prohibit the use of ad valorem taxes for racially mixed schools.* (author comments in italics)
6. That the governor be permitted to designate legal counsel in school cases and pay legal fees, expenses, and court costs for all legal counsel involved in school litigation: *This was regarded as largely a technical clarification since the governor already had, and had used to some extent the same powers.* ("Federal Court Hands Down First," 1959, p. 10). (author comments in italics)

This new desegregation law allowed Governor Vandiver to effectively block the first ruling handed down by a Federal Court against public school segregation in Georgia. The ruling occurred on January 9, 1959, in the case of *Hunt v. Arnold*, in which the court ruled that Georgia State College of Business Administration, now Georgia State University, could no longer refuse the

admission of qualified Blacks. Before the college could admit the student, Vandiver suspended registration indefinitely and used his cunning ingenuity to quickly push through the General Assembly a disguised segregation measure that prohibited admission of students over the age of twenty-five, knowing that the Black plaintiff who had not been excluded on other grounds was over twenty-five. His plan worked; the Black student was denied admission (Bolster, 1972, p. 164).

HOPE Persisted in the Fight for Public Schools in Georgia

However, even in the face of Vandiver's resistance, HOPE persisted. For tactical reasons, HOPE deliberately maintained a Whites only membership. As one of its founders, Muriel Lokey stated:

> HOPE chose to be White people persuading White people…it was seen as a tactical necessity, but it was not easy for some of us to endorse. We continued to wrestle with this during the whole time of our existence. At our executive meetings… people refused to join with us because of this policy. People left us because of that policy. People worked with us in spite of that policy. We never put it to rest. (Lokey, 1989, Videocassette Recording 12)

HOPE remained neutral in arguments involving desegregation. Frances Pauley, who coordinated the development of a statewide HOPE network, stated at a March 1959 speech:

> HOPE will not enter into the controversy of segregation vs. integration. It will say that we want…public schools operating legally. When this means desegregation in some places then HOPE Inc. will say it will be accepted. We will work to keep the schools from closing, but in the event a school is closed anywhere in Georgia we will work to reopen it as a public school. (Mertz, 1988, p. 6, 7)

In January 1958, the Atlanta NAACP filed suit in Federal Court charging that the Atlanta School Board was operating a racially segregated system. The Atlanta case was known as *Calhoun v. Latimer*, and according to Attorney General Cook it would totally disrupt construction of new schools in Atlanta and may cause schools to close. Cook also indicated that his office would act more aggressively against the NAACP by enforcing the state laws of barratry (the offense of persistently instigating lawsuits and stirring up of quarrels), champerty (assisting in litigation with money or service in exchange for a part of the proceeds of a case), and maintenance (excessive or unwanted intrusion into lawsuits of others by maintaining or assisting them). This was the second lawsuit attacking segregation in the public elementary and secondary schools in eight years and the first filed in Georgia at that level since the famous *Brown* decision (Murphy, 1959).

E. E. Moore, the attorney who represented the plaintiffs in *Calhoun v. Latimer (1958)* recalled: "HOPE did not focus on the idea that the schools would be desegregated. Instead the focus was centered on the idea of keeping the schools open, which targeted the moderate White community. This was an ingenious tactic" (E. E. Moore, interview with L. E. Wolfe, December 6, 1990, in O'Brien, 1999, p. 156).

HOPE organized a rally in Atlanta on March 4, 1959. Over 1,500 attended. Many prominent and influential persons who were actively involved in shaping Georgia's educational system attended the rally and pledged support for keeping

the public schools in Georgia open (Bolster, 1972). However, the atmosphere of intolerance had not subsided. An atmosphere of antagonism and continued threats against the organization remained constant. The organization was sometimes called a communist organization by those who had aligned themselves with those who favored segregation of schools in Georgia. In personal interviews with HOPE officials, Eugene Jones and Frances Pauley, O'Brien (1999) found that at one point, in 1959, HOPE discovered an undercover agent from the local FBI office secretly investigating the organization while posing as a volunteer.

Shortly after the March 1959 rally held by HOPE in downtown Atlanta, those in favor of segregation, led by Roy Harris and Peter Zack Geer, organized their own rally for continued segregated education (Lokey, 1989). Not long after HOPE's successful rally in Atlanta, the organization opened new branches in Gainesville, Marietta, Jonesboro, Rome, Macon, Savannah, and Athens (Mertz, 1993).

In June 1959, roughly seventeen-months after its initial filing, the Atlanta chapter of the NAACP finally got a hearing in the *Calhoun* case against the Atlanta School Board, which it had filed more than a year earlier on January 11, 1958. During the trial, Governor Vandiver served notice that if the courts ordered desegregation, he would have no choice but to close down the public schools of Atlanta. Governor Vandiver's warning was a clever attempt to place the burden of the school-race issue squarely on the shoulders of the judiciary. The Governor

expressed hope that "the Federal Courts will not force the closing of a single school" (Sarratt, 1966, p. 235).

The activities of HOPE and actions resulting from the Atlanta court case against the school board caused former Governor Ellis Arnall, the somewhat moderate and opponent of Eugene Talmadge, who had served as governor of Georgia from 1943-1946, to threaten to return to politics to help save the public schools of Georgia. Arnall, who was now just over 50 years old and having been out of politics for thirteen years, declared that he believed in segregation but only favored "as much segregation as was possible under the law" ("Two Federal Judges to Hear Testimony," 1959, p. 16). He maintained the position that a large degree of segregation could be maintained without abandoning the public school system. By the end of 1959, HOPE had succeeded in its campaign against statewide school closings and had made the argument for discussions of alternatives respectable (Bolster, 1972).

Court Approved Plan for Integrating Georgia's Schools

In January 1960, the federal district court finally approved a plan for the gradual desegregation of four high schools in Atlanta. The plan called for desegregating one grade per year, starting with the twelfth grade. It authorized local school administrators to use psychological tests and other "nonracial" criteria as instruments for placing Black students in four White high schools. While the plan appeared to many Black leaders as a half-hearted attempt to solve the problem of equal education for all, nevertheless, in the court's view, the plan

complied with the mandates of the *Brown* decision by abolishing segregation, and with the aims of the *Brown II* decision by making a reasonable start. However, as outlined, the plan in no way provided Blacks open access (Huie, 1967).

The desegregation decision made by the federal district court made it clear to Governor Vandiver that he would soon be forced to decide between closing public schools and massive resistance to school desegregation. The new court decision and the knowledge of outrage among moderates, liberals, and intellectuals caused by the state's policy to close public schools rather than desegregate them was taking its toll on the massive resistance movement in Georgia. The great political machine that held the key to shaping the future of public education in Georgia was being forced to change its direction (Bell, Kuhn, and Bost, 1991). Additionally, a growing black direct-action campaign was exerting acute pressure on Governor Vandiver who had run for governor on a strict desegregation platform. However, Roy Harris rebuked the prevailing logic that to allow a little "token integration" would be the best way to maintain de-facto segregation ("Reaction to Atlanta Hearing Mixed," 1960, p. 16). Harris continued his defiance.

The Sibley Commission (The General Assembly Committee on Schools)

Governor Vandiver took the advice of his Chief of Staff, Griffin Bell, and introduced a measure that created the General Assembly Committee on Schools, commonly known as the "Sibley Commission" after its chairman, John Adams Sibley (Sarratt, 1966). Sibley was a prominent Atlanta lawyer and former judge

who had grown up in Georgia and was very well respected throughout rural Georgia. Governor Vandiver ordered the Sibley Commission to hold public hearings in each of Georgia's twelve congressional districts to determine if the people of Georgia desired any changes in the private school plan and to report his findings by May 1, 1960 (Bartley, 1983). By early February 1960, HOPE supporters had developed a strategy that they hoped would provide a massive turnout at the meetings during the Sibley Commission hearings. The strategy called for "uninterrupted education" of Georgia's schools in order to show the state leaders that thousands of Georgians were willing to "stand up and be counted" (Mertz, 1988).

In March 1960, the Sibley Commission began weaving its way back and forth across Georgia gathering information from citizens regarding their position on desegregating public schools. With the first meeting in Americus, Georgia, large numbers of Blacks and Whites gathered and testified in favor of continued segregation and the private-school plan. This first meeting caused members of HOPE to recognize these proceedings as a serious threat to their cause. They quickly reorganized in order to assure that a respectable number of open-school advocates testified before the commission during future hearings (Lokey, 1989).

The commission visited ten congressional districts and held twelve hearings listening to an average of several hours of testimony every other day. When the commission finished visiting the districts across Georgia, it had listened to testimonies of more than 1,800 Georgians to determine how the people of Georgia

felt about public school desegregation. The hearings included Blacks and Whites, farmers and businessmen, teachers and housewives, including those who opposed the desegregation of Georgia's schools and those who supported abolition of desegregated schools. "Their views ranged from the thundering 'never!' of the States' Rights Council segregationist to the equally adamant demand for 'desegregation now' from members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People" ("Atlanta Awaits School Decision," 1960, p. 66). The States' Rights Council was an organization that Roy Harris of Augusta, Georgia, started in December 1955 after discussions with other segregationists about establishing private organizations as a legal means to preserve the social, political, and economic institutions of his beloved segregated South (O'Brien, 1999).

Segregationists saw Governor Vandiver's newly created Sibley Commission as hope for their cause, but moderates and liberal intellects were very concerned about how the commission might work and took an attitude of skepticism and misgivings. During the 1960 General Assembly proceedings, segregationists hoped that Governor Vandiver would follow the traditional course of "segregation now and forever" established by Eugene Talmadge, Herman Talmadge, S. Marvin Griffin, Richard Russell, Durwood Pye, William T. Bodenhamer, A. A. Fowler, Eugene Cook, and Roy Harris. Georgia's liberals saw the commission as a new political tool for Governor Vandiver to either evade a

tough political decision, closing public schools, or build a stronger case for defiance.

The Sibley Commission Hearings. John Adams Sibley recognized two points of view for Georgia's Education dilemma. As he and the other eighteen commission members traveled throughout Georgia, the seventy-one-year old Sibley surmised that the people of Georgia could (1) leave the state laws as they were, maintain rigid segregation, and risk public school closures, or (2) modify the existing laws so that local authorities could deal with desegregation in a way that they believed appropriate and with which conformed to their ideologies. He possessed progressive ideologies regarding what it would take to keep Georgia moving forward economically and socially. He had a strong personal appeal, which caused many Georgians to pause and give him attention. Sibley possessed a gentility and civility that were in sharp contrast to bold defiant methodologies of Herman Talmadge, S. Marvin Griffin, and political boss Roy Harris (O'Brien, 1999).

While Sibley was usually as courteous to Blacks as he was to Whites, during the hearings, he often shifted the choices offered to Blacks and did not give them a choice between a modification of the state laws or leaving the laws as they were—a choice which he offered Whites. Blacks were usually asked to indicate personal preference for segregation or integration. For example, during a particular interview of a Black minister, Sibley asked,

> I want to know your real convictions of what you think is best for your own race and the White race on this school question, whatever it may be. In your opinion, is it better for the colored children in the South to have separate schools, or whether to have integrated, mixed schools? (O'Brien, 1999, p. 178)

While interviewing another Black person, Sibley asked, "Do you think a Negro teacher is in a better position to educate a Negro pupil than a White teacher" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 178)?

These were clever questions that raised an interesting issue. Was Sibley attempting to validate one of the prevailing myths of the time that most Blacks in Georgia preferred enforced segregation or was he simply attempting to persuade Blacks that a segregated school system in Georgia was the best form of education for both races?

In South Georgia, where Blacks generally outnumbered Whites, most testimony favored the private school plan. In north Georgia, where HOPE had strong support and where Whites generally outnumbered Blacks, testimony favored local option ("John Adam Sibley Papers," Sibley, 1960b).

The Sibley Commission Report. The Sibley Commission completed its study and had written a summary of its findings by the end of April 1960. John Adams Sibley wrote the majority summary report, which was endorsed by a majority (10) of the remaining eighteen commission members. The majority report sharply opposed the *Brown* decision declaring that the famous court decision was utterly unsound on the facts and that it was a clear and present danger to our system of constitutional government (Sibley, 1960a). However, the report

concluded that Georgians must recognize that the decision exists; that it is binding on the lower Federal Courts, and that it will be enforced.

In an effort to gain the commission's unanimous endorsement, Sibley wrote the report in a manner that he believed was appealing to all members of the commission. Ignoring the fact that most people who testified did not favor any modification of the segregation laws, the report recommended several alternatives to closing public schools such as local option and freedom-of-choice options to parents. The freedom-of-choice recommendation provided an assurance that no child in Georgia would be required to attend school with a child of a different race, except on a voluntary basis. The report also included a clause that would allow for pupil transfers and direct tuition grants where no suitable school was available (Mackay, 1960). However, most of the report revealed to Georgians that private schools could not, as a practical matter educate the masses and declared that the courts would not validate a plan that would lease existing public schools to private organizations. Sibley placed the responsibility of closing public schools in Georgia in the hands of the people of the state, claiming:

> If the schools are closed…the state will go out of the school business permanently…and people will resort to private schools. Closing the schools otherwise is a useless gesture and can cause nothing but confusion, great economic loss, and utter chaos to the administration of the school system…Those who insist upon total segregation must face the fact that it cannot be maintained in public schools by state law. (Mackay, 1960, p. 4)

In the majority summary report, Sibley had advised continuing public schooling in Georgia that would preserve the creed of segregation. However,

Sibley's advice to abandon the state's decade old policy of open defiance was asking too much of the remaining nine minority members of the commission. The minority report, which was signed by the remaining nine commission members including six state legislators from rural counties, declared that Georgians should continue "exerting every influence to maintain segregation," (O'Brien, 1999, p. 181) including moving to a private school system "as a last resort" (p. 181).

The majority report, later known as the *Sibley Report*, provided Georgia's politicians and all Georgians with an official statement that the private school plan would not protect the system of public school segregation, and would needlessly sacrifice the public schools of Georgia (Sibley, 1960a). The report declared that closing the schools would be only a symbolic gesture toward preserving segregation; it would not serve the practical interests of any particular group of Georgians, particularly the state's 75,000 teachers and other school employees and nearly 1.35 million school children. The report maintained that without public schools, an important avenue of upward mobility for Georgia's emerging middle class would cease to exist (Sibley, 1960b).

The lack of public schools would destroy Georgia's "New South" image and harm the interests of Georgia's 'upper-class' and cut off the interests of business and industry, which had shaped the development of a segregated, class-based public school system. The report suggested that the best way to preserve these traditional interests for the state was to provide a rationale that would only allow the minimum change to the state's school segregation laws (O'Brien, 1999).

In summary, the Sibley Commission advised Georgians to maintain public schools and adopt and employ other means of resistance. The report fell well short of recommending open access for Black students to White schools (O'Brien, 1999).

The Court Sets School Desegregation Date in Georgia

On May 9, 1960, twelve days after the Sibley Commission's report was released, Federal District Court Judge Frank Hooper ordered the Atlanta school desegregation plan to go into effect on May 1, 1961. Six and a half years after the *Brown* decision, a time and place had finally been decided for the process of desegregation to begin in Georgia's schools. Judge Hooper deliberately included a one year delay in his order, stating that the built-in delay would be the "last chance" he would give state leaders and Georgians to avoid statewide school closures ("Judge Gives Atlanta Another," 1960, p. 16). Constance Baker Motley, the legal representative for the national office of the NAACP, indicated that he would appeal the ruling because of the delay. After arguing that an order dependent on legislative action would have to be appealed, Judge Hooper formally placed in the record statements that the school desegregation plan for Atlanta would become effective on May 1, 1961, regardless of any legislative actions.

The battle to save the public schools of Georgia was not over. Support for the private school plan in Georgia was still strong. Eventually, through much work by HOPE, support for the private school plan began to erode and the open-schools movement, which HOPE had fought so diligently for, began to experience huge support. Even though violent racism continued to exist in Atlanta, HOPE

organizers believed that the Fall of 1960 was "mind changing time all over Georgia" (Mertz, 1988, p. 41). However, on December 12, 1960, a powerful bomb exploded at English Avenue Elementary School, a Black elementary school in northwest Atlanta. Fortunately, the powerful blast did not kill anyone, but it caused extensive damage to several classrooms (O'Brien, 1999).

School Crisis Shifts to the University of Georgia. On Friday, January 6, 1961, Federal Court Judge William T. Bootle ruled "Two Black students, Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes, who had applied for admission to the University of Georgia (UGA) in the fall of 1960, would have been admitted had they been White" (Bolster, 1972, p. 166). Judge Bootle ruled that Hunter and Holmes must be admitted to the university immediately. This was an order by the court that caused great concern for Governor Vandiver. Vandiver was acutely aware of the political error Governor Eugene Talmadge had made in 1942 when he effectively used the Board of Regents to fire two professors who advocated racial integration in a laboratory school at the University of Georgia. This action resulted in temporary suspension of the university system's accreditation and became a major issue in the governor's race that led to the election of the race moderate Ellis Arnall (Bailes, 1969).

At the request of Governor Vandiver, former Governor Herman Talmadge, Attorney General Eugene Cook, and Political Counselor Burkett Murphy traveled to Macon to ask Judge William T. Bootle for a stay, pending appeal of his decision. Eventually, Judge Bootle granted a stay. However, Fifth Circuit Court

Judge Elbert Tuttle rescinded the stay that Judge Bootle had granted the state, putting more pressure on Governor Vandiver.

On January 9, 1961, Governor Vandiver sent a two-page letter to the Georgia General Assembly indicating that under the Appropriations' Act, Section VIII (d), of the 1956 Private School Plan Law; he was required to cut off funds to the University of Georgia. He termed it the "saddest duty of his life" (Vandiver, 1961a, p. 10), to recognize that state law now required him to act on this matter. In part the letter included the following:

> It is the saddest duty of my life to sign an order recognizing that such a condition as contemplated by the statute does in fact now exist and that state fund support must be withheld from the university. That I must do when the event takes place. I am sure that you and members of the General Assembly understand that no other alternative was available to me. After a 10-year legal battle conducted by the Attorney-General and the same special counsel, who have fought effectively and with dignity, all legal resources available and in this instance have been exhausted. (Vandiver, 1961a, p. 10)

Additionally, he added that the private school plan was a "roadblock" (p. 10) and an "albatross," (p. 10) which "if allowed to stand strips us of remaining safeguards" (p. 10). The governor called for the repeal of the fund-cutting requirement by urging the Georgia General Assembly to pass an amendment eliminating Section 8(d) of the Appropriations' Act as soon as it is possible to do so, claiming in the same letter:

> If allowed to remain in the law, its effect will be to close the doors of Georgia's hallowed halls, to cease bringing learning and enlightenment to over 7,500 young men and women pursuing a higher education, jeopardize their credits, create unrest among one of

> the most outstanding faculties in America and otherwise create harmful results without accomplishing anything. Such wanton disregard of the learning process, I am sure you will agree with me, would be unthinkable. (Vandiver, 1961a, p.10)

Governor Vandiver understood that the majority of the general public supported open-schools in Georgia, particularly at the University of Georgia. Vandiver showed Georgians that he had exhausted every means of appeal before he formally proposed that the General Assembly rescind the private school plan and other massive resistance measures.

Judge William T. Bootle's and Judge Elbert Tuttle's decisions changed the time, place, and level of public schooling in which desegregation in Georgia would first occur. The admittance of Hunter and Holmes to the University of Georgia was the first desegregation in public education in the state of Georgia.

The Open School Package

Appearing before a joint session of the General Assembly, Governor Ernest Vandiver made the choice for Georgia by proclaiming that both public schooling and segregated education must be preserved in Georgia. However, he added that the current legislation was insufficient protection against federal "usurpation of state authority" (Georgia General Assembly, 1961, p. 232) and asked the legislature to repeal the laws setting up the private school plan.

Acting on this matter, Vandiver introduced four bills known by some Georgians as the "open schools" package. These bills asked for a repeal of the law

that prohibited the expenditure of state or local funds for desegregated schools. The governor's open schools package of four laws included:

1. Grants-in-aid, the most significant to repeal all present segregation laws in an effort to force each Negro applicant to exhaust his administrative remedies by proving his individual qualifications to enter a particular school: *The measure would set up state tuition grants with no mention of segregation or desegregation. The existing grant-in-aid plan, approved by the people as a constitutional amendment in 1954, is effectively only on the closing of a public school.* (author comments in italics)
2. A "child protection" amendment, which would prohibit any child from being forced to attend a school with Negroes*: The child would be eligible to receive state funds to pay for private schooling.* (author comments in italics)
3. A local option bill governing suspension and re-opening of a local school system: *It would allow school patrons and voters in a local school system to suspend or close the school district and would also permit reopening of a school if voters wanted to do it.* (author comments in italics)
4. A bill to change the procedure of administrative appeals made from local boards to the State Board of Education: *Administration spokesmen said the bill would clarify some conflicts that existed under present law and pointed out that Judge Hooper raised questions as to whether existing*

laws authorized an appeal to the state board from a city school system. The proposed measure specifically addressed what some called a "possible deficiency" as well as eliminated what was described as a "dangerous possibility" by removing general supervisory power of the State Board of Education over public schools. This law provided for each system to have the authority to adopt its own pupil placement regulations. (author comments in italics)

The language and implications of these laws were not always clear, but some knowledgeable observers interpreted the action to mean in summary: The bill repealed the acts providing for tuition grants and the closing of schools, and allowed the governor to close a single school system ordered to desegregate. Additionally, it prohibited ad valorem taxes for racially integrated schools. The bill included new provisions to "secure the constitutional rights of school children to attend private schools of their choice" ("Vandiver Commends Legislators' Actions," 1961b, p. 16) and a new tuition grant program. It included local option procedures for closing and reopening public schools in desegregation crises and a provision that set up an extensive procedure for local appeals, making it more difficult to litigate local school issues in Federal Court. However, no provisions were made to repeal the laws that applied to segregation in general or to the measures that had to do with disposing of public school property ("Vandiver Commends Legislators' Actions," 1961b). A few days later the Georgia legislature voted to pass the Open Schools Bill so that it would become law (Georgia laws,

1961, p. 37). The new Open Schools Bill essentially removed Georgia's massive resistance machine and replaced it with a smaller localized fragmented system of resistance. Governor Vandiver and the Georgia legislature had successfully devised a means to ensure that public schools in Georgia would not close, but neither would they allow Black students open access.

Desegregated Public Schools Start in Atlanta Georgia

Judge Hooper ordered four Atlanta high schools to begin desegregation in September 1961. The Atlanta School Board and its Superintendent, John Letson, began plans to make integrating Atlanta's schools a peaceful and uneventful process. However, the process was difficult, long, and tedious. After much delay by the school board, Eliza Paschall, executive secretary of the Greater Atlanta Council of Human Relations (GACHR), wrote the Atlanta School Board and requested that it stop its foot-dragging antics and urged genuine desegregation (Paschall, 1961). The Atlanta NAACP viewed the Atlanta plan as just another sinister way to avoid full and immediate compliance with Judge Hooper's order to integrate four Atlanta high schools. The Atlanta desegregation plan indicated to the local NAACP that the real battle was only beginning (Ecke, 1972).

As Georgia's open massive resistance movement declined, HOPE leaders felt that the organization's primary objectives had been accomplished. HOPE continued to function and worked to ensure that Atlanta's public schools desegregated orderly. However, in the summer of 1961, under the name, "Organizations Assisting Schools in September (OASIS), HOPE combined with

53 other organizations to prepare for a safe and smooth desegregation process in the fall" (Sarratt, 1966, p. 316).

On August 30, 1961, nine Black students entered four previously all White high schools in Atlanta, Georgia. A total of 268 African American students applied to transfer to the White schools, however, only 10 applications were approved (Ecke, 1972). This amounted to less than 4% of the students who applied for transfer; a mere cup of water had been poured into the ocean. City leaders and OASIS had prepared well for the event. Unlike many other southern cities, Georgia had accomplished "token desegregation" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 191) in a relatively calm fashion. No Klansmen marched, no mobs were present, no bombs exploded, and no protesters harassed the students (O'Brien, 1999). Seven years after the *Brown* decision, the first peaceful desegregation of a public high school in the Deep South had been accomplished in Atlanta, Georgia (O'Brien, 1999).

This was a great moral and social accomplishment for OASIS, HOPE, NAACP, and many progressive Georgians; however, this was simply "token" school desegregation. Open access for Black students to Georgia's public schools was still many years away. Although the desegregation process in Georgia was ultimately carried out in a calm fashion in Atlanta in 1961, open defiance would continue to exist for many years to come (O'Brien, 1999). Almost 10 years later, in January 1970, Governor Lester Maddox, a fiery segregationist, led a march around the state capitol to protest a court ordered plan to transfer 1,800 of

Atlanta's 5,000 public school teachers in order to achieve racial balance for faculty within the school district ("Supreme Court: At Once," 1970).

Because of the calm manner in which desegregation was accomplished in Atlanta, OASIS and HOPE believed that their jobs were finished. OASIS completely disbanded while HOPE closed its office and declared it would function only on "a standby basis" (O'Brien, 1999, p. 193; Sarratt, 1966, p. 316).

Desegregation of Lowndes County Schools

Between 1969 and 1971, the rate at which schools in Georgia desegregated increased more rapidly than it had in previous years. Perhaps, this was due mainly to the court's tougher stance and to the federal Department of HEW requiring that total desegregation be in place by September 1969, with the deadline extended to September 1970 in some cases.

Lowndes County, located in extreme South Georgia, experienced only minor difficulties in integrating its school system. HEW approved the county's limited freedom-of-choice desegregation plan for the 1965-1966 school year. This plan was restricted to grades nine and twelve only, and put in place to shrewdly evade full desegregation of all schools on an immediate basis. It also allowed for the process of school desegregation to take place at a slow rate and over a relatively long period of time.

During the summer of 1967, Lowndes County School Board officials made a number of requests to HEW asking that the county's freedom-of-choice plan be permitted to continue to function as a means of achieving desegregation. In

December 1967, a hearing examiner for HEW ruled that the Lowndes County School System operated in non-compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and that $342,000 in federal funds would be cut from the county school system (Miller, 1968).

By March 1968, under its freedom-of-choice plan, Lowndes County had 217 Black students enrolled in its White schools. Setbacks, however, continued in Lowndes County (Valdosta, Georgia) Schools. HEW issued new desegregation guidelines that stipulated total elimination of the dual system of public schooling by the beginning of the school year 1969-1970. An additional blow was dealt to the school system when the U. S. Supreme Court disallowed any school systems to use freedom-of-choice plans if there were other reasonable options to achieve school integration (Formwalt & Williams, 1997).

In spite of the school board and Superintendent A. B. Martin's efforts for a smooth process of school integration in Lowndes County Schools, on July 11, 1968, the Justice Department announced that it had filed suit against the Lowndes County School System for failing to effectively eliminate its dual schools. The suit contended that within the Lowndes County School System, all White students still attended mostly White schools while more than 85% of African American students remained in all-Black schools. The suit also contained issues on faculty employment and assignments based on race, and a substandard curriculum used in Black schools (Formwalt & Williams, 1997). Superintendent Martin had planned to argue that the Lowndes County freedom-of-choice plan gave equal opportunity

to all students and that HEW had in fact, recommended the freedom-of-choice plan in its earlier guidelines for desegregation. Superintendent Martin and the Lowndes County School Board further planned to deny the charges that Black schools had a substandard curriculum. The problem in Lowndes County was not an isolated case. In July 1968, 48% of all public school systems in Georgia were not receiving public funds or were in danger of losing such funds as a result of their desegregation rate having been deemed unsatisfactory by either HEW or by the courts (Formwalt & Williams, 1997).

Attorney Fred H. Walker represented the Lowndes County School System and appeared before Judge William A. Bootle in the U.S. Middle District Court in Macon on August 21, 1968. Judge Bootle ruled that the Lowndes County School Board and Superintendent Martin were guilty of noncompliance with the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Judge Bootle cited two major problems with Lowndes County Schools: (a) A lack of faculty desegregation; and (b) continued existence of traditionally Black segregated schools, none of which ever had White students enrolled. Bootle gave Lowndes County sixty days to prepare an acceptable desegregation plan (Formwalt & Williams, 1997).

On September 24, 1968, the Lowndes County School Board and Superintendent Martin met to design a complete desegregation plan. On October 15, 1968, the Board met in a special session to consider citizen responses and to incorporate their input into a potentially acceptable desegregation plan. After extended deliberations, the board drafted a plan it believed would be acceptable by

the Justice Department and the federal district courts and would completely desegregate Lowndes County Schools. Martin reported that he and the board believed that closing the four Black schools and expanding the predominately White schools was the fairest way to achieve an end to the dual system of education in Lowndes County and the most workable desegregation plan among three choices (school assignment, school pairing, and consolidation/bond referendum). He also claimed that this plan would necessitate a $1.2 million building program and a bond referendum. He explained that a school consolidation plan would create a student ratio of 70% White to 30% Black in all schools that remained open (Formwalt & Williams, 1997).

On January 27, 1969, Judge William Bootle informed Lowndes County School System Superintendent A. B. Martin that he had approved the plan in principle. Also, Judge Bootle extended the deadline until September 1970 for Lowndes County to complete the school desegregation process (Crouse, 1969a). He further instructed in his ruling that all students not in grades designated to integrate in September 1969 were to be allowed freedom-of-choice moves and that White teachers would have to work in Black schools during the 1969-1970 school year (Crouse, 1969a). As early as the next day, the Lowndes County School Board met to begin implementing the Federal Court order (Formwalt & Williams, 1997).

The U. S. Justice Department required that Lowndes County amend the Federal Court order to provide that all of the nearly 350 seniors at Westside High School, the Black high school, enroll at Lowndes High School and that the

superintendent specify the number of faculty transferred to achieve integrated faculties among the schools. "The board agreed that it would specify that no less than one White teacher be assigned at each Black school, and as nearly as possible, the number of Black teachers assigned to predominately White schools would be proportional to the number of Black students enrolled at the various schools for the 1969-1970 school year" (Minutes, Lowndes County Board of Education, 1969, p. 97).

Over the next few months following Judge Bootle's decision to accept the Lowndes County School desegregation plan, the board met several times and received input from local citizens, Black and White, on how to proceed to resolve the school desegregation problem. At one of the school board's regular meetings, the board members ultimately presented a plan that included eliminating one White school and the four Black schools in the county, a plan that the NAACP denounced as totally unacceptable to the Blacks of Lowndes County. Five Negro men attended the meeting: Mr. Abraham Clemons, Reverend W. H. Brown, president of the local NAACP chapter, Mr. A. A. Sirmons, Mr. Eddie Tucker, and Mr. Don L. Crawford. During the school board meeting, which was held on March 4, 1969, in which the five members of the NAACP had requested to attend and had been granted entrance, one of the NAACP members, Mr. Eddie Tucker, asked a penetrating question: "If the buildings were good enough for us all this time, why are they suddenly not good enough now?" (Crouse, 1969b, p. 1, 6.; Moore & Moore, 1997, p. 50). Board member, Dr. Richard K. Winston, responded saying,

"it was cheaper and better to have fewer but larger schools and to eliminate the duplication of services such as lunchrooms and libraries" (Crouse, 1969b, p. 1, 6.; Moore & Moore, 1997, p. 50).

Reverend W. H. Brown, president of the local chapter of the NAACP, held an executive council meeting in which members of the board of education and the superintendent were invited. The heated meeting focused on two major concerns held by the NAACP and the Black community: (a) the closing of all four Black schools in Lowndes County, and (b) the feared lack of job security for Black teachers, administrators, and staff. Blacks felt that it was impossible to determine what was best for all people of the community without any consultation from the minority group ("County Mix Plans," 1969; Crouse, 1969b). Blacks charged that there had been no suggestions on the part of any officials as to the welfare and employment of Black teachers, bus drivers, cooks and other employees in the proposed plan for closing the Black schools. Other issues involved school organizations and activities that would be displaced as Blacks located in other schools. Board Chairman George Moulton assured those in attendance that the board planned to retain all Black and White teachers and other school personnel who were best qualified. He explained that the desegregation process would not reduce the total number of students in the county and that there were state requirements on how many students could be in a classroom ("Desegregation: Too late to make changes," 1969).

The board held a series of community meetings in an attempt to explain to all citizens the school system's desegregation plan and the $1.3 million, increased from $1.2 million, bond issue attached to it. During one such meeting held on April 30, 1969, at one of the Black schools, Superintendent Martin spoke of the advantages of an improved, more diversified curriculum, and how the proposed changes would provide more opportunities for student improvement. He stressed, "We are attempting to give your child something better than he has had. Won't you help us? Don't you want your child to have something better than you had?" (Crouse, 1969c, p. 1).

Many Blacks were skeptical of his comments and had strong feelings of uncertainty regarding the plan. They overtly questioned its fairness. One woman stated that it was time for White students to suffer as Black students had for so long. She stated, "The schools will be the White man's schools" (Crouse, 1969c, p. 1). Another man spoke with strong conviction: "The whole thing is they (White people) don't want our teachers teaching them. It is alright [sic] for White teachers to teach ours in their schools but the White teachers wouldn't come to our school" (Crouse, 1969c, p. 1). These remarks and similar ones were often heard throughout African American communities in Georgia during the 1960s.

On May 7, 1969, 2,025 Lowndes County citizens voted, passing the bond referendum by a margin of 56%. Many citizens and organizations had supported the bond issue for quite some time. *The Valdosta Daily Times* had kept the community informed and provided strong support for the bond referendum during

the five days preceding the vote. Martin called the referendum "the most important bond issue ever held in the county for the school children" (Formwalt & Williams, 1997, p. 57). Within two days after the voters approved the desegregation bond referendum, the Lowndes County School Board began implementing the desegregation plan throughout all of its schools. After the school bonds were formerly issued the board listed thirty-seven teachers that would transfer their school assignments in order to achieve faculty integration for the 1969-1970 school year.

On Tuesday, September 3, 1969, the schools of Lowndes County desegregated relatively quietly with no major problems. Despite the somewhat high frequency of disagreements between local African Americans and the school board, no civil disorder occurred. Lowndes High, the county's largest school, had 929 White students and 392 Black students; approximately a 70:30% ratio. As the 1969-1970 school year came to a close, integration success stories outnumbered problems involving desegregation. However, from time to time problems involving desegregation and race did exist in some schools (Formwalt & Williams, 1997).

The Lowndes County Public School System was recognized statewide for the relatively smooth success experienced in desegregating its schools. Valdosta resident and Georgia's Eighth District State Department of Education Representative, T. M. Atkinson, stated that he felt that the smooth transition occurred because Blacks and Whites tended to get along better in rural areas.

justice by offering them a refreshing new direction in which to move the state. In his inaugural address Carter stated:

> I say to you quite frankly that the time for racial discrimination is over. Our people have already made this major and difficult decision, but we cannot underestimate the challenge of hundreds of minor decisions yet to be made. Our inherent human charity and our religious beliefs will be taxed to the limit. No poor, rural, weak, or black person should ever have to bear the additional burden of being deprived of an education, a job or simple justice. We Georgians are fully capable of making our own judgments and managing our own affairs. We who are strong or in positions of leadership must realize that the responsibility for making correct decisions in the future is ours. As Governor, I will never shirk this responsibility. (Black, 1976, p. 70)

For the first time in Georgia history, one of its Governors had offered a bold and new challenge for Georgians to turn away from the ideologies of those, "Who believes in and can be depended on to preserve our great social and political tradition and the Georgia way of life" (Black, 1976, p. 66).

Philanthropists Aid Public Education in Georgia

The efforts of northern philanthropists to increase the number of Black industrial teachers by developing small private Black normal and high schools and by assisting with the improvement of public school buildings and education programs in Georgia is one of the most ignored aspects of Black educational history of the early twentieth century (Anderson, 1988). A profound look at the efforts of philanthropists at the turn of the century provides a clear understanding of these wealthy individuals' motivations to implant their social and educational

ideology into southern institutionalized teacher training programs. Additionally, close surveillance of the efforts of these humanitarians reveals the extent to which the intellectual debates about the purpose of Black education reflected the seriousness of the struggle to determine and control the amount and type of subject matter that Black schools could offer. The struggle to shape and control Black schools during the first half of the twentieth century rested on the premise that those who shaped the beliefs and behavior of Black teachers would also heavily influence the minds of Black children (Anderson, 1988).

Philanthropic benevolence is an extremely important component of Georgia's public school history. Philanthropy played a major role in the development of public education and the direction that it took in Georgia. During the early to mid twentieth century philanthropic support was particularly strong in securing and establishing institutions of higher education for African Americans. Negro philanthropic organizations existed and contributed significantly to Black education in Georgia and throughout the South. The leading Negro philanthropic organization was the African Methodist Episcopal church, which paved the way for Black religious denominations to establish and maintain colleges for African Americans (Anderson, 1988).

Other African American missionary and religious philanthropic organizations made significant contributions to education in Georgia as well. Contributions that northern White philanthropists and other philanthropic organizations made to higher education for African Americans in Georgia was

equal to their support to secondary and elementary education. Motivated by religious zeal, political ambition, or by a combination of the two, church organizations and wealthy individuals began to establish philanthropic organizations in Georgia and in several other Southern states (Anderson, 1988; Bullock, 1967). During the first four decades of the twentieth century Northern philanthropists considered small private Black normal schools and high schools as the most strategic means for supplementing the Hampton-Tuskegee model of industrial education for Blacks (Anderson, 1988; Bullock, 1967). The list of White philanthropists extends as far back as 1882 and is quite long. At the top of the list are such names as: John F. Slater, John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, George F. Peabody, Julius Rosenwald, and Anna T. Jeanes (Bullock, 1967). By 1900 an economic revolution had started in the United States. Although the Conference for Education in the South was very effective in its efforts to buffer the needs of southern education both programmatically and financially, it could not influence enough public financial support to meet the educational needs of the southern states. Other sources of revenue had to be found if state educational programs were to move forward (Bullock, 1967).

Humanitarianism from a number of wealthy Northern industrialists took aim at Georgia and other southern states to assure the preservation of educational opportunities for African Americans. Though often very generous, clearly the philanthropic services from the North did not amount to a crusade of racial equality for African Americans. Services and gifts rendered by northerners

through philanthropic acts fell well within the parameters of the southern tradition and racist culture established by powerful White politicians and other Whites with power and influence within the state (Bullock, 1967). Northern philanthropists provided teachers, buildings, materials, and huge monetary gifts and endowments for public schools in Georgia but offered little to challenge the ideologies of White supremacy, bigotry, and racism that permeated the state. Northern philanthropists pacified southern Whites who opposed their efforts to establish industrial education for Negroes by accepting racial segregation and not directly challenging the root problems of poverty, racial injustice, and Black disfranchisement (Anderson, 1988; Bullock, 1967).

Philanthropists such as John D. Rockefeller, George F. Peabody, and Andrew Carnegie provided huge donations to assist public education in Georgia as well as in many other parts of the country. The generous cash contributions, endowment funds, land, and buildings that many northern philanthropists contributed to public education within the state of Georgia are too vast to detail in this report. Consequently, this study reported on some of the philanthropic services and contributions of Miss Anna T. Jeanes and Mr. Julius Rosenwald because of their particularly immense gifts and influence on African American public school teachers and students in Georgia between 1908 and 1958.

Publicly supported supervision for African American teachers in Georgia was very rare and at the county level White superintendents usually ignored Black schools and offered very little administrative support. White teacher-supervisors

virtually ignored Black schools and concentrated their time and energies on White schools (Logan, 1927). At the turn of the twentieth century, urban schools in Georgia were noticeably deficient and conditions in rural schools were appalling. The trickle of money from the public treasury was simply not enough to build new schools or even to keep older schools operating effectively (Bullock, 1967).

Many northern philanthropists realized that something had to be done and Georgia, as did many other states, found financial assistance through a number of wealthy individuals who were very able and willing to offer financial support to the state's educational programs. Many of these individuals were particularly interested in helping African Americans achieve an education comparable to that of Whites and provided immense contributions specifically for uplifting and improving education for African Americans in Georgia and throughout the rural South (Bullock, 1967; Dabney, 1969b; O'Brien, 1999).

The Anna T. Jeanes Contribution

It should be noted that there were many agencies and funds other than the Anna T. Jeanes Fund that took an interest in Negro education in the North and South and supported Negro education with huge financial gifts. Among these Northern humanitarian industrialists who saw fit to help preserve education in Georgia and particularly including rural Negro schools was Miss Anna T. Jeanes, a Quaker philanthropist from Philadelphia. Miss Jeanes was born in 1822 and died at the age of 85 in 1907. Miss Anna T. Jeanes was a single woman of extreme

wealth who began a campaign to change the deplorable situation of Black schools in the South (Bullock, 1967).

The Rural School Fund. Miss Jeanes was deeply concerned about American charitable organizations and educational institutions, and she gave generously to the support of public education in America. Throughout her adult life she showed a deep interest and concern for the education of the American Negro particularly in the South where the Negro suffered tremendous moral, social, and political injustices at the hands of southern Whites (Bullock, 1967). Shortly after 1900, Dr. Hollis Frissell of Hampton Institute and Dr. Booker T. Washington of Tuskegee Institute approached Miss Anna T. Jeans seeking financial assistance in developing rural school programs that had been started by their respective institutions.

However, it was the hard work and educational philosophy of Booker T. Washington that influenced John D. Rockefeller to establish the General Education Board in 1902, which eventually stimulated Miss Jeanes to establish the Anna T. Jeanes Fund in 1907, which became known as the "Negro Rural School Fund" (Bullock, 1967, p. 137). This action set the course for Anna T. Jeanes to firmly pursue her deep interest in the development of industrial and manual training in rural Negro schools. The Fund supported regular teachers and master teachers who traveled to rural areas throughout Georgia and other parts of the South, teaching and supervising in rural African American schools under the

direction of county supervisors (Wooster, 1997). Consequently, the traveling teachers became known as Jeanes teachers or Jeanes supervisors.

Anna Jeanes immediately embarked upon a philanthropic program that would provide funds and services to develop industrial and manual training for Black rural schools through state departments of education in Georgia and other Southern states with a particular focus on teacher preparation in county training schools. Miss Jeanes took advantage of the General Education Board's plan to place its employees within southern state departments of education as official staff members. The Board-paid staff member would assist the state by serving as a state agent or supervisor for Black rural schools. These state supervisors were all White men of considerable experience as school superintendents or in some other school management capacity (Anderson, 1988). The Jeanes fund affected practically every branch of Negro education in the South (Spencer, 1955).

Miss Jeanes made her first contribution to Negro education in 1905 when she donated a check for $200,000 to the General Education Board and designated that the money be used to assist rural Negro schools of the Southern U.S. States. She targeted Southern states because of the great mass of Negroes concentrated in the South. During the span of her life, she made many huge monetary gifts designated to improve Black education in Georgia and throughout the South (Brawley, 1930). Shortly before her death, Miss Jeanes donated one million dollars to the rural school effort. She requested that the fund be used to assist rural Southern schools, where the great mass of Negroes lived and attended school

(Brawley, 1930). The deed of trust was drawn in April 1907 and the donation was incorporated in November 1907 giving rise to the Rural School Fund, which ultimately played a significant role in the development of educational opportunities for rural Southern Negroes. The fund provided money to hire teacher-supervisors for Black rural schools (Bullock, 1967).

The Jeanes fund was utilized extensively in Georgia. The program was under the general administration of the Georgia Department of Education. The department created the Division of Negro Education, which hired a state agent to oversee organizing Black schooling throughout the state. Working in the "best interests of the Negroes" (Southern Education Foundation, 1975, p. 24), placing emphasis on instruction in hygiene, manual and domestic science, and agriculture, the state agent became the liaison between county school officials, state-level school administrators, and philanthropic foundations, and ultimately became the critical link to public funding for Black schools (Southern Education Foundation, 1975). However, this type of education for Negroes was not intended to advance them politically and economically, nor was it to provide any level of social mobility but rather to curve the cultural burden and economic lag the Negro supposedly placed on the South (Anderson, 1988)

The Rural School Fund focused, however, on nourishing the special education concept that would keep Negroes in their place and isolated from the enlightened social and affluent economic opportunities enjoyed by Whites (Wright & Redcay, 1933). In 1908, the board of trustees for the Rural School Fund

formulated a three-step policy which stated: (1) that the general educational situation be studied carefully, (2) that any action taken should have the approval and cooperation of local school officials, and (3) that the fund should be used, as much as possible, to help provide opportunities for effective training for rural life among Southern Negroes (Wright & Redcay, 1933).

In 1909, Booker T. Washington served as chairman of the corporation's executive committee. At an executive meeting on July 1, 1909 Washington questioned whether the Negro was getting his fair share of the allocated funds for his education. He then suggested that a suitable Southern White man be employed to influence public sentiment in favor of Negro education. As a result of Washington's suggestion, B. C. Caldwell, a White man, was appointed as field agent for the fund on December 16, 1909 (Wright & Redcay, 1933). This appointment placed the Jeanes Rural School Fund firmly under White control (Bullock, 1967).

The Jeanes Supervisor. Jeanes supervisors, with few exceptions, were Southern Black women who had to undergo specialized training in the industrial training model. Jeanes supervisors were to play the role of facilitator and helper for teachers and schools, and serve as a liaison for the school and community (Bullock, 1967). Potential Black Jeanes supervisors were screened and carefully chosen based on proven abilities to recognize and improve the inadequate training and deficient cultural attainment of the Negro teacher (Joiner, 1979). Jeanes supervisors who were White were supposed to sympathize with Blacks'

"backward rural conditions" (Orr, 1950, p. 319). These special supervisors, under the direction of the state agent, but reporting to local county superintendents, were responsible for working directly with the classroom teacher in developing effective teaching strategies, organizing lesson plans, and introducing instruction on home industries and economics, sanitation, personal cleanliness, and gardening. Often the Jeanes supervisor served as a mentor, master teacher, and community organizer. They also assisted county superintendents with reports on attendance, the maintenance of school buildings and other school property and resources materials (Bullock, 1967; O'Brien, 1999).

Miss Virginia E. Randolph, a Negro teacher in Henrico County near Richmond, Virginia, with a reputation as an energetic hard worker who emphasized vocational education for Blacks, was the first Jeanes supervisor appointed in October 1908 by the board of trustees for the Jeanes fund. She became the forerunner of a particularized army of such teachers that would impact Black teachers and the Black community in Georgia for the next fifty years (Bullock, 1967). The departments of education of various states provided salaries and expenses for Jeanes supervisors, sometimes referred to as Jeanes teachers, and through cooperation with local boards of education assigned them to work with local Negro public schools. These workers, who were virtually Assistant Superintendents, were put to work throughout rural Georgia (Southern Education Foundation, 1975).

Jeanes supervisors often faced obstacles and difficult tasks in their work. Jeanes teachers encountered and attempted to resolve problems between school administrators and parents, school administrators and teachers, and curriculum issues. Often Jeanes supervisors had to travel great distances between schools, and at times the terrain and weather became obstacles, which they had to overcome. Before automobiles were widely affordable, many Jeanes supervisors walked from school to school. Often, inadequately trained teachers and inadequate school resources hampered the work that needed to be accomplished. However, the work of Jeanes supervisors made many school inadequacies more apparent. What public officials lacked in ability or willingness to supervise and nourish rural schools for Negroes, Jeanes supervisors supplied (Bullock, 1967). In rural Georgia, young new African American teachers usually functioned under the direct guidance of a Jeanes supervisor. The Jeanes supervisors checked on the personal life and conduct of her younger colleagues. "Jeanes supervisors got it in their heads that it was part of their duty to keep young teachers in line with the demands of the school system's Jeanes supervisors" (Crawford, 1996, p. 74). Mandates and expectations of Jeanes supervisors became the focal points from which many rural schools functioned. Some Jeanes supervisors did not positively influence teachers. Reports exist that claim Jeanes supervisors often irritated teachers and caused teachers to become dissatisfied with the level of work Jeanes supervisors expected, but not to the extent that they became too discouraged to improve their lot (Southern Education Foundation, 1975).

Jeanes supervisors labored to stimulate interest and encourage cooperation in building more and better schools within assigned counties. Duties called for Jeanes supervisors to assist teachers in developing lesson plans and preparing for other academic and nonacademic activities. In addition to pedagogical activities, Jeanes supervisors were expected to penetrate the Black community and arouse interest in varied activities that would improve the Black community and reinforce the social, economic, and racial status quo (Southern Education Foundation, 1975). At the annual Jeanes teachers' conferences between 1948 and 1952 and at the Jeanes regional centers, Jeanes supervisors worked in concert with principals, the GTEA, and other state organizations and school officials strategizing and discussing the importance of teachers visiting homes and spending time in the community (Siddle Walker, 2001). Teachers were highly influenced by the ideas resulting from discussions at Jeanes supervisors' meetings and other Black education-association meetings. These ideas and discussions on school and community were so important in the educational concepts and principles of Black teachers that they were reinforced during in-service workshops offered by Albany State College as documented in the 1949 *Herald*, the quarterly publication of the Georgia Teachers and Education Association (Siddle Walker, 2001).

Fieldwork for Jeanes supervisors included attending local churches on Sundays and addressing congregations on matters relating to local schools. "They cultivated methods of handling those White citizens who were hostile or indifferent in their feelings about the Negro schools" (Southern Education

Foundation, 1975, p. 136). Through the diplomacy of Jeanes supervisors, many individuals, White and Black, who would have been formidable foes toward Anna Jeanes' efforts, often became staunch allies" (Southern Education Foundation, 1975, p. 136). In order to accomplish a particular mission, sometimes diplomacy dictated that the Jeanes supervisor retreat at a time when her emotions commanded that she attack. Jeanes supervisors were paid at a better rate than regular teachers and looked upon with a considerable amount of prestige within the Black community. This prestigious status carried by Black Jeanes supervisors lead some Whites who favored traditional views and values, including some superintendents, to oppose the Jeanes program (O'Brien, 1999).

The Julius Rosenwald Contribution

Julius Rosenwald was born August 12, 1862, in Springfield, Illinois, the son of a German Jewish immigrant who worked his way from peddler to partner in a clothing concern (Werner, 1939). Julius Rosenwald was a great civic servant and a tenacious worker. In 1909, he became president of Sears, Roebuck and company. He amassed a fortune as the leader of Sears and became one of America's leading philanthropists. Rosenwald took a keen interest in a wide range of humanitarian, community, and social causes, including hospitals and health care, colleges and museums, and Jewish charities. His major concern was Negro equality in the South, with a particular interest and passion toward Negro education (Newbold, 1928; Werner, 1939).

Rosenwald's interest in philanthropic service was encouraged by philanthropists, Paul J. Sachs of the Goldman Sachs investment house and William H. Baldwin of the Southern Railway, and by the writings and books of the renowned Black educator, political, and social activist, Booker Taliaferro Washington, who founded Tuskegee Institute in Alabama in 1881 (Anderson, 1988; Bullock, 1967; Werner, 1939). The Rosenwald school story begins with Booker T. Washington, principal of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, now Tuskegee University. Booker T. Washington approached Julius Rosenwald in 1912 and asked him to help with the education program at his Alabama school. Rosenwald was fascinated by Booker T. Washington and agreed whole-heartedly with Washington's philosophy of Black self-help, as well as the Tuskegee Institute's industrial design of education for the Negro (Bullock, 1967; Rosenwald School, National Trust Historic Preservation, On-line, 2004).

The Julius Rosenwald Fund. The Julius Rosenwald Fund was incorporated in Illinois, October 30, 1917, for the purpose of conducting a number of charitable activities that Mr. Rosenwald would undertake prior to his death on January 6, 1932. The broad, chartered purpose was stated as providing for "the well-being of mankind," and the fund aimed, more specifically, to stimulate more equitable opportunities for Negroes in a democracy that had fallen short of its promises (Bullock, 1967, p. 127; T. Hayes, personal communication, January 14, 2004). The Rosenwald plan of operation was a simple one. Mr. Rosenwald would aid in building Negro schools whenever a state, local Negroes, and Whites would

contribute towards the necessary funds for a modern school for Negro children. His plan would focus on southern states (Dabney, 1969b). First, Mr. Rosenwald and his directors focused their attentions on building rural schools, shops, and teacher houses throughout the southern states. He later turned his attention toward the support of high schools and colleges, and the provisions of fellowships to enable Negroes and Whites of unusual promise to advance their careers. No philanthropic foundation ever formed a more benevolent proceeding for Negro education than the Julius Rosenwald Fund (Bullock, 1967).

By 1931, the Julius Rosenwald Fund had laid a firm foundation and completed all components for a solid financial system for educating African Americans in Georgia and throughout the South. Rosenwald along with the directors of his trust had gained adequate support for building rural schools, teacher houses, and training shops aimed at training young African Americans for a better rural life. The Rosenwald program had established uniform standards for building and operating his schools with close supervision placed in the hands of White school officials, which reduced considerably the fears held by Whites that the Rosenwald Fund was creating an institution that would lead to social equality between the races (Bullock, 1967). While the Rosenwald school program did not challenge school segregation head-on, it did challenge the racial ideology behind segregation (Anderson, 1988; Rosenwald School, National Trust Historic Preservation, On-line, 2004).

Progressive community leaders, educators, and school architects recognized Rosenwald schools as part of their campaign for modern standardized school plans. The modest school buildings were cost-conscious and designed with industrial rooms that allowed them to be easily identified as rural schools for Black children. Professional educators and cost-conscious school administrators used the Rosenwald plans to develop state approved schools for Black and White students that were not funded by Rosenwald. Although the controlling authority imposed racist laws that required separate education for White and Black children in Georgia, Julius Rosenwald's generous contributions and work to improve education often resulted in both groups learning in schools that looked and felt the same with open, bright, and clean classrooms (Anderson, 1988; Rosenwald School, National Trust Historic Preservation, On-line, 2004; T. Hayes, personal communication, January 14, 2004).

The Rosenwald Fund was most successful between 1912 and 1920. With the help of Negroes and Whites pooling their time and monetary resources, the fund had contracted to build 640 schoolhouses and had completed 400 by July 1, 1920. In 1920 Rosenwald established the fund's southern headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee, and transferred the administration of the school construction program from Tuskegee Institute to the new Nashville office. Samuel L. Smith, state agent of education for Negro Rural Schools in Tennessee, was appointed director of the fund's southern operations (Anderson, 1988; T. Hayes, personal communication, January 14, 2004).

By 1934, the Rosenwald program had constructed more than 5,300 school buildings in 15 Southern and Southwestern states (Rosenwald School, National Trust Historic Preservation, On-line, 2004). Table 1 shows the impact and results of the Rosenwald Fund contribution to public education in Georgia. Rosenwald schools, shops and teacher homes operated under various names that were commonly associated with the local community in which they served. The schools were built from a distinct architectural design, which provided for plenty of space and huge windows that offered maximum lighting, even though many of them were one-room schools. These schools, homes, and shops were constructed in many rural counties and towns across Georgia.

Table 1

Results of the Rosenwald Fund in Georgia

Schools	Homes	Shops	Total Buildings	Pupil Capacity	Teacher Capacity	Black ($) Contribution
242	12	7	261	37,305	829	253,852

White ($) Contribution($)	Tax Funds($)	Rosenwald Aid ($)	Total Cost ($)
$118,456	$759,002	$247,569	$1,378,859

Many of the Rosenwald schools constructed between 1913 and 1932 remained in operation until the 1954 Supreme Court ruling against racial segregation in *Brown v. Board of Education* of Topeka. The ruling was implemented in Georgia during the 1960s and served as the basis for school integration in the 1970s. Between 1913 and 1932, Rosenwald schools served generations of teachers, students, parents, and other community members. After integration of public schools integrated, most Rosenwald schools were destroyed or simply abandoned. Some were eventually occupied by private concerns (Rosenwald Schools, National Trust for Historic Preservation, On-line, January 2004).

After Julius Rosenwald's death in 1932, Edwin Embree, secretary of the Rosenwald Fund, announced that the school building program would terminate at the end of that year. The last Rosenwald School was constructed in 1937 in Warm Springs, Georgia, at the request of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The Southern Office closed at the end of 1937 and Samuel L. Smith retired at the end of that same year. Eleven years later, the Julius Rosenwald Fund distributed its last grants and went out of existence, just as its founder had intended (Anderson, 1988; Hoffschwelle, 2004; J. Cyriaque, personal communication, January 20, 2004).

Traditionally, the existence of Rosenwald school buildings was very significant within the Black community because schools and churches were the only places Blacks could meet before desegregation spread across Georgia during the mid 1960s. As of January 1, 2004, 31 sites where Rosenwald schools once

stood had been found and 22 of the 242 schools built in Georgia had been located and were still standing (Hoffschwelle, 2004; J. Cyriaque, personal communication, January 21, 2004; Strickland, 2003).

The Conflict of Political and Educational Goals

Conflict between the "political" and "educational" aims and purposes of schooling has existed throughout the emergence of public schools in Georgia. A common premise about schooling is that its primary purpose is to provide quality education for all citizens of the state, produce productive citizens, and ultimately produce a better quality of living for all Georgians. Yet, the literature clearly suggested that the political aims of education have been to use it as a means for certain groups to foster a type of Caste System and maintain social and economic power over many others (Ballantine, 1997; Grant & Sleeter, 1986; O'Brien, 1999). The power brokers, politicians, and elites of Georgia adamantly supported maintaining a segregated school system in Georgia even after the 1954 Supreme Court decision of *Brown v. Board of Education* (Pou, 1959).

Through 1997, segregation in public schools to a significant degree, continues to exist, but in more subtle and hidden ways. In schools today, segregation exists in more latent styles and in two general forms: "between-schools" segregation and "within-schools" segregation (Howe, 1997).

Between-Schools Segregation

Between-schools segregation separates students and assigns them to different schools on the basis of race, ethnicity, and color. The high court's

decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* was intended to end between-school segregation (Howe, 1997). The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision (1954) declared: "In the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate-but-equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." The decision appears in volume 347 US 483, 1954.

Therefore, an essential argument of *Brown* was that even if resources were distributed equally among racially segregated schools, legally sanctioned segregation might stigmatize and demoralize segregated groups to a degree so as to permanently disadvantage them. In many cases, it appears that the "but-equal" part of the argument has been all but forgotten. Author and researcher J. Kozol, emphasized in his work, *Savage Inequalities* (1991), that in addition to the obvious consequences of unequal resources, those who typically lacked adequate resources, such as racial and ethnic minorities, could not help but feel that they were not worth much in the eyes of society (Kozol, 1991). Those who are disadvantaged usually find such inequities quite demoralizing, particularly when they understand that there exists a deep-rooted separatist movement that, in effect, possesses an overwhelming desire to reinstate the separate-but-equal principle (Kozol, 1991).

Freeman, Scafidi, and Sjoquist (2002), report in a study released as late as 2002 that public schools in Georgia experienced a small increase in Black-White segregation in recent years. They reported that the percentage of Georgia's students who attended schools with more than 70% African American students

increased from 17.7% in 1994-1995 to 19.1% in 2000-2001. The study showed that statewide, most of the segregation between schools is due to segregation across school districts. The study also found that the highest between-schools segregation exists within metropolitan Atlanta and that more than 80% of Georgia's public school teachers are White.

Within-School Segregation

Within-school segregation assigns students to the same school, but separates them by assigning different curricular options based on test scores and such premises of belonging within a gifted or special category. Within-school segregation is associated with differentiating the school curriculum in accordance with academic talents. School curricula can be altered and made to differ in a variety of ways. Essentially, resegregation occurs "within" schools via selected course assignments and "ability grouping." This has caused a belief among some Black parents that integrated schools do not offer any significant academic advantage to Black students and that they may be better off in resegregated schools (Kusimo, 1999).

These multi-faceted educational programs give rise to a number of distinct groups, units, or individuals all functioning within one school system and in many times within a single school. Often, these groups within a particular school create social and academic subsystems that breed animosity, bigotry, and belligerence among students. Within-school segregation is a systematic form of separating students wherein the so called gifted students are at the upper extreme, the

Conclusion To Historical View of Public Education in Georgia

Georgia's public schools, have been established, anchored, and cultivated in the midst of racial politics, bigotry, economic bias, and disenfranchisement for African Americans. They (Georgia's Public schools and its African Americans citizens) have endured a strenuous test. For nearly a century, the growth and development of the public schools of Georgia were driven by the politics of race and class stratification that privileged elitist and upper-income Whites. By the end of 1965, it was clear that public education in Georgia would survive. It was also clear that race and class politics would continue to play a dominant role in shaping the purpose and patterns of schooling in Georgia and in the larger society.

The modern public and private schools of Georgia are thriving institutions in which growth has reached an all time high. Georgia's modern educational system, at least theoretically, is composed of open access schools that have great financial and material resources, well-equipped buildings, varied educational units (primary and secondary schools, vocational and technical schools, junior colleges, senior colleges, and universities), technologically strong, diverse curricula, and all the modern-day comforts. The one-room country schools, with virtually none-existent or extremely limited resources once found throughout the great state of Georgia prior to 1947 are a thing of the past (Howe, 1997).

Georgia's current public and private educational facilities are modern specimens of the old Southern Way of Life and of the politics of race. They are a

function of nearly one hundred years of the Black struggle to secure literacy and a quality education, as well as equality and upward mobility in a society equally matched by racism and White resistance. The school was and does represent a major component in identifying the struggle for Black liberation. Blacks have always understood that equal access to schooling and improved education are key factors in the Black struggle for survival in a society where self-preservation, social status, and economic security are weighted measures for determining one's very existence as a productive citizen (Anderson, 1988). Georgia's system of public education is a well-established integral part of White society that has not been shared equally with African Americans.

The issue of control is extremely significant to educational development in any community. Historically, Whites have garnered influence over the economy, achieved high or meaningful educational status, and had access to or control over powerful communications media and political officials who possessed great influence over education in Georgia. Also, Whites who maintain leadership roles in business, industry, social, civic, and educational organizations usually influence the role of education in Georgia (O'Brien, 1999).

Georgia's system of public education also served as 'the' major battlegrounds for the Black struggle for social justice, economic stability, and human dignity. The public school reflects the character of the state by shaping the quality, condition, and productivity of its citizens. Thus, the public school is one of the state's most important institutions.

C. A. Grant and C. E. Sleeter, in *After the School Bells Ri*ng, 1986, examined the issue of schooling and the quality of teaching in relationship to cultural, racial, and gender backgrounds of students. Their analysis of the issue is centered on conflict theory and is a typical example of the development and impact of public schooling (public education) in Georgia. Grant and Sleeter (1986) argue that society and its institutions are formed by conflicts of interests among competing groups. Dominant groups have often used education to maintain dominance over lesser groups, rather than using it to serve as a vehicle to improve and promote equality for the less dominant group.

According to Grant and Sleeter (1986), schools and school systems sort and select young students for a labor market that is unequal. Schools controlled by Whites also teach young students to accept the idea that unequal distribution of wealth and power is just. This is particularly true when it comes to minorities in America. The African American experience is that American society has historically been tilted in favor of Whites, the dominant population. Wealth, power, social acceptance, and status are usually distributed unequally on the basis of race, sex, and social class background. The majority group seeks to maintain control over resources and privileges, while subordinate minority groups struggle to gain and maintain just enough resources and privileges necessary to barely survive (Grant & Sleeter, 1986).

Currently, many public schools and public school systems in Georgia structure curriculum in a variety of ways. Some schools use the magnet concept,

which allows students to focus on a narrow range of subjects and activities. Others offer so called gifted programs for select students, still other schools offer Advanced Placement (AP) courses for some students and actually award college credit for completing these courses. Many schools in Georgia use tracking, ability grouping, differential discipline, and even test scores from tests that represent areas of uncommon or limited exposure for African Americans and other minorities. Participants in this study agree with many who argue that schools that use these grouping elements in the curriculum often perpetuate racism, race segregation, and the "old South tradition" that prevailed during the era of strict segregation (Howe, 1997).

and presentation of specified data offer the researcher certain freedoms from subjectivity often inherent in the process of reporting data. Schmertzing proposed that, to a large degree, portraits remove researcher interference and bias in data presentation by linking qualitative research findings directly to their source, and reporting such findings using the participants' own words to convey their stories. Foster (1997) and Lawrence-Lightfoot (1983), whose existing studies were also significant in guiding the format of the portraits in this study, suggested that research data provided through portraits offer a unique measure of freedom from the impurities of subjectivity and other constraints that are often embedded in more traditional and disciplined research methods.

The portraits presented in this study were written so that the participants' personal dimensions would be revealed to readers. In writing the portraits, I served primarily as a conduit. I used the participants' original language transcribed from actual interviews without placing emphasis on sanitizing or concealing the refrains and language structure that is peculiar to African Americans. However, data taken directly from the participants' interviews were arranged and organized in a manner that would provide a smooth connection between certain issues and meanings that were fragmented at the time they were originally discussed.

I placed quotation marks around certain statements and passages to demonstrate where participants placed more emphasis or stressed their tones with greater intensification while speaking. The portraits allow readers to hear the participants' minority voices, their deviant views (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983), and

the spoken language that often differs from conventional or Standard English, which African Americans frequently use to express themselves and to communicate with each other. I wanted the portraits to capture the essence of the participants, lift their individual feelings, tendencies, strengths and weaknesses, and pierce the veil that otherwise would allow them to be viewed as just public school teachers (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983).

The Ethnograph IV is a qualitative data analysis computer software program that I used to code and organize transcriptions in a manner that facilitated my discovery of the participants' philosophies and meanings associated with particular issues and events. The Ethnograph IV enabled me to track the stories of the experiences African American educators and ultimately create a participant's portrait.

Each portrait begins with a brief introductory profile of each participant and ends with a brief epilogue, both written in italics to emphasize that I constructed the passage. I used quotation marks in certain passages within the portraits to indicate where participants spoke with greater emphasis or expressed more passionately than when they used their normal speaking tone. The portraits present a characterization of how each teacher dealt with racial and other issues in education, before and after school integration. Additionally, the portraits provide a refreshing and unique method for data reporting that allows readers the opportunity to view and evaluate what the participants were saying as opposed to my own interpretation of their statements (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983).

Ellipses were used throughout the portraits to indicate that the participant had an extended pause before continuing to finish his or her sentence. I have provided a few comments within some of the portraits. These comments have been enclosed within brackets and were provided for clarity relative to a particular issue or statement made by the participant.

Portrait

Ellen Parker

Allow me to introduce Mrs. Ellen Parker. Mrs. Parker is the oldest of five siblings born to Mr. Matthew Hention and Violet McClendon [maiden name]. She is a beautiful lady in her late sixties with a light brown complexion. She is physically strong and looks much younger than her actual age. She speaks slowly and firmly and exudes an air of excellence regarding her years as a public school teacher in Georgia. Mrs. Parker was an elementary school teacher and she taught in the public schools of Georgia for a total of 31 years. She first entered the classroom in 1953 and she retired in 1990. Mrs. Parker has many accolades for her great teaching ability. She loves children and believes that parents and teachers should spend time nurturing children.

I am the oldest of five siblings; I did not know my grandfather on my mother's side. My grandfather on my dad's side came from Raleigh, North Carolina, to Southwest Georgia. Both of my grandmothers were born in slavery. One of the grandmothers tells the story of how the ole master came and picked her up; they were cleaning the lawn when he gave her a piece of striped candy, picked her up, threw her on the bus, and carried her with him. He [the White master] just took her from her mother. Therefore, her children were mixed. Whites owned my

things but I do remember that. But as we grew up ah…round about fifth grade ah… I remember, I went to school in Bainbridge, Georgia. My father felt that down there where we were in Donaldsonville, it just did not have enough to offer. He wanted his children well educated. "He had only a sixth grade education but he believed in education. You had to get it. They pushed very much. Yes, they thought that education was it." You just had to get it, and ah…my Aunt Marie Dixon was from Bainbridge but she taught over there at Albany State College.

I went to school from fifth grade all the way up through tenth grade in Bainbridge, but during my last year I went to school in Donaldsonville, Georgia. I graduated from high school in 1950. They didn't have twelfth grade back then. When I graduated, schools cut off at the eleventh grade. After I got my last year in Donaldsonville, I knew I was going to go to Albany State College since my Aunt Marie Dixon, taught over there.

I knew what I was going to do after college. I always wanted to be a teacher. I looked up to teachers because teachers were very… very important in those days and that's all there was, teachers. There was very little of anything else that could be done among Black families unless it was nursing and yes, you had to go to college to be a nurse. My sister wanted to be a nurse and I wanted to be a teacher. Now, even when I was at home, I never did play much… unless I was playing a teacher. I played teacher all the time. That's about all…they'll tell you right now, when they have family reunions they talk about how I used to play. I'd have magazines or books or something reading all the time, and I had to be the

teacher. Teachers were very much looked up to in the Black community and parents thought that teaching was what you should do. [spoken with great emphasis] "Teachers were very important in the community, very important and well respected."

I received my B.S. Degree at Albany State College and I started teaching fulltime immediately after that. So, my first actual teaching job was in Donaldsonville, Georgia, where the school was all Black. The principal was a relative of mine; his name is Rambeau. Also, my brother was just starting school then and I taught him. It just seems to me, as I think about it now, I just tried to push him so much. I really pushed him.

Oh, yeah, my father had a job for me before I even finished college. I had gotten a job in Orlando, Florida, for the summer, and he said, "Oh no, you're going home. You can get a job at home. I already have it for you." Well, in those days children did what the parents said. So, I had to do that…[laughs] I had to go home. But I had already accepted a job in Florida, and would have made more money. Another thing, I stayed out one year because my sister had to go to college. Well, let's see, I finished Albany State College in 1954. So, that had to be 1953 when I stayed out a year. So, when I became a junior in college, I got a job teaching at home… in order to help out. My father wasn't able to send both of us to college, so I stayed out that year and I saved my money. Then I came back to Albany State College the next year. I also attended Albany State two summers for science courses. You know how they [schools required teachers to take continuing

education courses in order to teach certain subjects] sent students to colleges in the summer time. Well, I was one of the students that they sent to Albany State in the summer for science. They had a good science program over there and I went to that program two summers.

When I came back to Albany State College to finish [after being out for a year while teaching in Seminole County] my sister had already finished. So, I finished that year and I went back [home]. I went on back down there [to Donaldsonville] and taught another two years. After two years there I felt I had matured and everything so I left there and I got a job in Leesburg, Georgia. I taught two years up there in the Lee County School System. Then that's when I came back to Albany to teach. That must have been about 1958.

But when I first started teaching down home in Donaldsonville, there were four teachers there. In fact, it was a four-teacher school that was located way out in the country. It was a wooden building. It went from first through seventh grade, and then after seventh grade you had to go up town to the high school. The high school was a nice brick building and it was an all Black school.

Now, in Donaldsonville they always had good schools. I recall, we used to go play basketball in Climax, Cairo, and all those little towns and places like that. All of those little towns had old army barracks that they used as schools, but we always had a nice school building in Donaldsonville, Georgia. Even the wooden school building that was down in the country was a nice building.

We had books the White children had already used. I remember, last names, I didn't know any [didn't know any white students]... you'd be surprised. I hate to say it and I don't like to say it because it's kind of unusual, but I hardly knew any of the Whites by their faces, I knew them by their last names. Where we attended school and where we taught school there were only Blacks there so we didn't see Whites very often.

We were living in a segregated society. Then our families had their own property and everything, so we didn't deal with Whites very much. Where we lived was just Blacks. Anyway, the books that we had were very old used books and they were all marked up, some of them torn, you know, pages torn out. We could see names in them that I remember. I remember the Alday family. I knew they came from the White school because I remember the names of Whites. The names of Whites like Alday, Phillips, and Earnest families. I remember those names. I didn't know those White people by looking at them, but I knew those were the names of some of the White families down there. Even up town at the Black high school they had books that came from the White school. They were all marked up, I can't ever remember getting any new books.

We had erasers at school and crayons but my father was so much into education, he kept us supplied with paper and pencils. He bought these things for us. Remember he had a pretty good job, that box factory in Bainbridge was a place with good jobs. They looked at it as one of "the best" jobs in Bainbridge.

The school down home [in Donaldsonville] had three rooms. There were two teachers in the first through the third grade, and the fourth through the seventh grade had two teachers to cover those classes. They had it divided off; there was a thing [a portable wall divider] you could pull back. They had an ole potbelly heater there and we had to bring our lunch to school because there were no lunchrooms. Also, there were no busses. We had to walk, ah… I think it was three and a half miles each way.

Whites had busses. Many times we would leave school and go by our grandmother's and she would usually have some cookies for us, you know. While going up the highway these ah…busses would come by with White children on them, and "they'd spit on us." They would spit out at us and call us all kind of names. Racial names, yes, they sure did. Whites were bussed when we were walking. For as long as I can remember they [White students] were bussed. They were bussed from wherever they lived. There were no busses for Blacks. You either walked or your parents carried you to school. There were no busses, for Blacks. This was in my elementary grades, during the forties. I walked to school until I went to school in Bainbridge, Georgia, for my last year. Whites were riding busses all the time.

Busses for Blacks started later. My father started working at night so he could drive the school bus for Blacks during the day. He was the first bus driver down there to carry Black children to school. He had to buy the bus with his own

money and for many years he worked nights there in Bainbridge and drove the school bus during the day.

Well, Black students were really attentive and they wanted to learn, but those that were on the farms stayed out quite a bit because they had to work. Also, those that stayed on the White people's farms stayed out even more often. They didn't even start school when we started. They had to stay out and work for the White people. They gathered the crops, getting the cotton and all that stuff, and they came to school much later than we did. I suppose that the parents and those White people, the bosses, kept them out. Now, the Black kids that were my relatives really didn't stay out much. They really didn't stay out much because they lived on their own farms. But there were some Blacks that lived down by the church in what was called the [emphasis] "turpentine quarters" down there. Sometimes they went to school too but not often. Overall, there weren't too many Blacks staying out of school. It's just that those that lived on the White peoples' places didn't start until late. They stayed out to gather the crops for the White man. Sure did!

I always felt the Whites had what they needed, I don't really know, because we had their old books. [spoken in an angrily tone] "Those old books were like nothing, they were all smeared up, old nasty words in them, and you know, just old nasty drawings. Many times I would erase names and erase drawings I found in the books."

We had good furniture in our school, very good furniture. The school itself was nice; we always had a brick building for high school and a big campus. We even had an economic building. The teachers would cook and sew. Black Jeanes supervisors would come in and out of the school all the time. I taught at the high school and I never saw the superintendent, ever. I never did.

I was never denied a position due to my skin color. I have been lucky about that. Everywhere I went I got the job, just like that. I didn't even go for a job interview in Donaldsonville; my father got that job for me. When I went to Leesburg, Georgia, I took my sister there for a job, and ah…I'm the one who got the job. We laugh about it sometimes now. When I came to work in Albany, Georgia, a teacher working in Sylvester asked me to take her to the superintendent's office there [in Albany]. I took her, and then she asked me to fill out an application. So, she sat in the car while I went in there to apply for a teaching position. I filled out the forms and application and as I finished he [the superintendent] took a piece of paper and tore off a small piece and wrote something, and he put it on my application. It worried me to death. I thought I had split a verb or something. I asked my cousin who was a Jeanes supervisor here at that time to find out what he had written on my application. I later found what he had actually written and placed on my application was, "very good prospect." She told me that he wrote down that I was a very good prospect. The superintendent [in Albany] told me that since I already had a job in Lee County, to just hold on to

it. I let him know that I was just filling out an application and that I was not seriously looking for a job.

Later, Mr. Dent [an elementary school principal from one of the Albany schools in Dougherty County] came to see me that Monday evening, I was mowing the lawn. Mr. Dent and I sat down and talked for a while. He asked me various questions and he asked if I drank. I told him no. I didn't like it that he asked me that, I really was offended. I really was. He was really trying to not hire people that drank. Anyway, he handed me the application to ah…sign. So, I began teaching at River Road Elementary School in Dougherty County in the mid 1950s. It was an all Black school located on the poor side of town. I taught there for several years and then I went overseas with my husband.

Well, when I left here [Albany, Georgia] I wrote a letter and resigned, but I let the superintendent know that I would like to come back into the school system upon returning from overseas. So, when I came back I decided to stay in Albany until December since my family couldn't live on the military base in North Carolina where my husband had been assigned. I thought I would be leaving in December. So, I contacted the Dougherty County School system and the superintendent told me to ah…just wait until they got the enrollment figures for the county, so he could see where he was going to place me. He said he was almost sure that he would need another teacher.

I also called the superintendent in Lee County and he informed me that one of the principals there [in Leesburg] needed some teachers because he had fired

about four teachers. At the time, I was staying with my sister because I thought I was not going to be in Albany long anyway. So, he later called me about taking the job in Leesburg and I took it. I worked that year and I had a lot of problems. It was in an all Black school in Lee County and it was terrible. I had already been overseas and in North Carolina, where I saw our students so far behind. While overseas, I taught mixed students. In fact, I remember I only taught about four Black children during the entire time I was in Japan. My husband had insisted that I go overseas with him; I really didn't want to go, but I loved him.

Anyway, going to Leesburg, I found they had no materials. They had books that…[pausing long] had come from the White school, all smeared up…the same was true when I was teaching at River Road Elementary prior to going overseas. This was much later though, this was in the seventies, in Leesburg, and they were still using White children's books. They were still getting the smeared old dirty books from the White school.

What I found from the Black principals was that really they didn't want to rock the boat. They didn't want to ask the White superintendents for anything because they were fearful of loosing their good jobs. My principal had been the same way before I went overseas. I don't believe that the Black schools were getting the same amount of resource money as White schools. I don't know for sure but based on what I saw, I don't believe it to be so.

They [the school in Leesburg, Georgia] were also selling candy, cookies, peanuts, and popcorn from vending machines. We had that at River Road [an

elementary school in Albany, Georgia] when I was there, but in Leesburg it was awful. I had already gotten a touch of how far our children were behind. I was so hurt seeing that they were behind the White student, in terms of knowledge and in terms of reading, and writing. I found out just how far we were behind the Whites. Most of the Black students, even the good ones were not at the level with most of the White students.

I went there and the principal immediately assigned me to the lunchroom. I worked lunchroom duty the entire time students were having lunch, through all the elementary grades. All right, seeing how I permanently got the lunchroom duty, eventually I refused to go because I felt the duty should have been shared among all teachers. I thought the teaching was awful when I compared it to what I was accustom to and where I had been. I have always been concerned, I'm one of those…very much like my father, and I have always been concerned about our people. When I went up there [to Leesburg] that year and saw how far they were behind I was shocked. There were four teachers in each grade. They only had four new books for each subject. How can you give four new books to a whole class? What students are you going to give them to? They were used to doing it so they thought nothing about it. Four teachers got only four new books each; four spelling books, four science books, and so on. What I wanted to know was, "what four students were you going to give those four new books?" They just gave them out. I said, "You can't do that, I wouldn't like it as a parent or a student. Here's John over here with a new book and I've got one of these old smeared up books."

One of the teachers said, "Well, you just give them out to whoever gets them." I didn't like that. That really bothered me.

I suggested that we not have our own class remain in one room for all the subjects. I suggested students move from room to room, like they're doing now. That's the way they did it overseas. You take math and I'll take science or some other subject, like they're doing it now. You take whatever subject you are comfortable with. If you like reading, then take that if you are comfortable with it. I'll take math if I am comfortable with it. But the teachers were so used to doing it as they were. "Oh no, no I'll just take my…no I don't want it like that." I tried to explain, "It's better to departmentalize the classes and let the children have a full set of books. If you teach mathematics then you could get a full set of math books." But they didn't want that, they weren't use to it so they did not want that.

The children had good manners but were not learning anything. I had fifth grade and I tested them. They were reading on second grade level. These were fifth graders, reading on a second grade level. They did not want to departmentalize because they felt that the principal was not going to like it and would not go along with it. The principal didn't like me because I refused to take that lunchroom duty. Well, I guess I was young, and back then if I thought I really had to have that job, I guess I would have taken the lunchroom duty. But I am kind of fiery anyway. I don't know how I held a job through all those years like I did, but I did. But I tell you, when it came to my students, I was very much in tune

with them. They were my heart! "I like to share because I have one goal. That is to help that child. That's all I'm looking for."

In Lee County they still had Jeanes supervisors. The Jeanes supervisor was a White lady. When she came to our school she would look around in the classrooms. She would always sit in my room. Well, she had found out that I was from somewhere else. She discovered that I had worked overseas. They will take everything you know. You know they go for it. Anything they can learn from you they will, they are good at that. They are very good at that. Anything they think you got that they can get, they get right with it. In fact, I brought a lot of materials back that I had used in Japan. They didn't have teaching materials here at that time like we had in Japan and that was odd to me. The schools overseas in Japan were run like the schools in California. I had quite a bit of subject materials and ah…other resource materials. So, she just grabbed on to me. She would come and sit in my classroom and observe what I had on the board, and she would ask, "Would you give me a copy of that?" She said, "Run me off a copy of this and I'm going to take it to the other school." She would never say, "White school," she would say take it to the "other school." She was taking materials from me and carrying them to the White school. These were good resources, so she stuck right with me. However, she did visit other teachers from time to time.

Even the superintendent would come by some time and ah…he would always compliment me. He told me once that he had never been on campus at a time when he'd not seen me in my classroom. The Jeanes teacher also saw that the

children were progressing too, because I would test them. We had to do quite a bit of testing to see if they were making progress. But we had no books. I could not give them those smeared and torn up books.

One day, I went to the library and I saw a large stack of phonics books that had never been used. There were stacks of books up there and nobody knew how to teach phonics. I asked about the books and the librarians said, "Oh get them. Please get them." She said, "Nobody wants them. Nobody knows how to teach it, so take them."

I hate to say it but that Black school was terrible. They were selling peanuts; they were selling candy, they were selling cookies, and popcorn. Students were going in and out all times of the day buying popcorn and buying peanuts. I don't know what happened to the money. They said it went to the superintendent's office. The Jeanes supervisor would come over and I know she had to smell the scent of popcorn, but nothing was ever done about it. I was there for one year and then I left there and came to Lake Park Elementary in Dougherty County.

In the mean time, the superintendent in Dougherty County called for me. He wanted to place me in one of the Dougherty County schools. He had been ordered to integrate his schools and he wanted to use me to integrate one of the schools in the system. You know that's that token thing there. I was the first Black teacher at Lake Park Elementary. I worked there three years before anybody [any other Black teacher] came there. It was about 1971 or 1972. Lake Park Elementary School out on the west side was the elite White school and it was located in an

upper class White neighborhood. The children were mostly children of doctors, lawyers, and wealthy businessmen.

When the superintendent from Dougherty County called me he said, "I'd like to place you. You know this integration thing…" that's not how he phrased it but he was telling me that he wanted to use me to integrate. He said something like ah…"You know we got to… we got to have some Black teachers. We got to have Black teachers somewhere, so I'd like to use you." He said, "You been… you've taught overseas, so I want to use you for this integration thing." That's what he said. Later he called me but I was teaching in Leesburg at that time, I knew we were leaving in December anyway because my husband was due to be reassigned to another military base. So, I just went on and took the job in Leesburg. Anyway, I said to him, "Well, I'm working up there in Leesburg.'' Then he said, "Well, I'll talk with the superintendent and see if I can get you here. I'll see if they will release you, you know." So, he did, and the Leesburg superintendent told me he wished I wouldn't leave. "I wish you wouldn't go, but I will leave it to the principal." The principal had fallen out with me [had become angry toward her] because I refused to take that job in the lunchroom. But he wouldn't let me go. I could imagine he would have if he could have gotten another teacher, but he couldn't get a teacher so I had to finish that year out. The next year I actually made my way to Lake Park Elementary School in Albany.

At the beginning of that year the superintendent called for me to come down and talk to him. And I went to his office. I sat and talked with him. He said

"I need you at Lake Park." He said, "You know, we got to do this integration thing and I need you to integrate Dougherty County." I said, " OK." I didn't mind because I had four years working with many different kinds of students and teachers where I was the only Black teacher. I've really been through a lot. So, ah…ah…he said, " I want you to go out and talk with her [Mrs. Davis, the principal at Lake Park Elementary School] before school starts." He said, " ah… she want to meet you." He told me, "Now, I think you know how to handle her." He said, "She say ah…she didn't want any niggres in her school." That's what he told me. He said ole lady Davis said, "She didn't want any niggres in her school," that's the way he said it. Then he said, "But…I'm going to place you there." I said, "OK." It was tough, so I decided I wouldn't go see her before school started as he had requested. I wouldn't even go meet her. I went on the first day of school, when the other teachers came and she didn't like that!

I walked in on the first day of school. All the teachers were lined up in the hall. They were lined up in the hall waiting on me. They were all standing up talking and I walked in and said, "Good morning." Nobody said a word. They wouldn't even speak. The principal was sitting in her office door, which opened into the hall. She was sitting there waiting, and I walked up to her, held my hand out, and introduced myself. She didn't even shake my hand. No, she wouldn't shake my hand. She said, "Well, I been waiting on you." I said, "Well I'm here." I was ready for her [she chuckles ha, ha, ha, as she speaks]. I said, "Well, I'm here." So, ah… she said, "Well, it's time." She expected me to come when the

superintendent told me to come earlier but I didn't go. I guess I was starting off wrong. But anyway, she called a meeting and ah… we were all in a big meeting room, and I was the only Black sitting there. She introduced me. She said, [speaking in a mocking tone] "She been all over the world." That was wrong, but she was trying to make them accept me, I guess, or either the superintendent told her to say that to try to make them accept me. She was trying to make it easy, you know. So, ah… she said, "I think the children will like her, I think the children are going to like Mrs. Creighton [prior to becoming Mrs. Parker she was Mrs. Creighton] because ah… she'll be teaching social studies and you know in social studies we have singing and we have dancing." That's what she said. And I let her talk.

When she finished I raised my hand, I said, " Mrs. Davis, I hope the students will enjoy my class, but I can't dance and I don't sing." I can't remember what she said but she turned real red. But anyway, that was a "put down." You know, putting me in my place right then. It was an insult to me. I was very much insulted. She was really lowering my status as a teacher as if to say, I would not be a real teacher, assigned academic courses. Her implications were that I was there to just teach dancing and singing. But I had to maintain professionalism. I could not go overboard. I couldn't let them think that they were getting next to me. But when they stopped speaking to me, I gave them the same; I just gave it back. They don't like for you to give them what they give to you. I learned that. So, things went on and they put me in a little closed room with no windows. That was

different from what all the other teachers had. I believe it was a room where they showed all the films and everything, because it was a nice school. All of the other classrooms had windows but I was in a room where they did not have windows. It was dark in there all the time unless the lights were on. So, I kept the lights on, I had to. I felt she was putting me to the side because of my race. Even now, I feel it was an act of racism, I really do, I really feel that way. I had some of the nicest students; yet, she didn't ever come in my room.

The students were wonderful but they started off looking at me as a maid. At that time we had to take our children out on the playground and we had to stand out there with them. They would bring their watches to me; all of them brought their coats to me…not just my students, other students from other classrooms. And I was steadily letting them know, "I'm not your maid," and I was very adamant about it. This was not going on with the other teachers and all of us were standing out there together. But they would bring their things to me.

I was their first experience with a Black teacher, now I really didn't take it harshly at all because I know that's all they knew, maids. Back then Black maids were driving them up and bringing them to school. They were dropping them off. All them cars lined up, and it would be maids dropping them off. However, they [the students] were very nice to me, always bringing me something like a cinnamon roll or something; they were very nice students, very mannered. "Yes ma'm, no ma'm," all like that, but I still say they looked at me as their maid.

At that time teachers had to report grades at the end of every sixth week period. So, that first six weeks they just wouldn't work for me. They worked for the other teachers. They did the schoolwork I assigned, but they got the White teachers' lesson first. They would be in my classroom working on something the White teachers had already assigned them and I would challenge them about it…"Well, Mrs. so and so wants me to do this," and I would say, "You're in my room." They would say, "Well, I'll get yours, I'll get to yours." It was as if my assignments didn't make a difference. They were not giving me the full respect that they were giving the White teachers. The children were kind and lovable, but they didn't see me as a teacher.

As far as the teachers, the teachers in my grade group tried to be nice. They really did. There was one teacher there from Tennessee or Kentucky and her husband was the manager of a local industrial plant. She was the one that really made me comfortable. I don't care where we went, if we had to go to any meetings, she was with me. You know, seems like she was the one that I guess the principal pointed out and asked her to do that, or she was trying to let me feel that she was different. Some of the other teachers would meet me in the hall and it was just like an animal coming, something from the zoo, they wouldn't speak. I felt a little isolated, I did, but like I said, ah…I had experience they didn't have. I kept that in my mind and that is what kept me going. I had something they didn't have. I felt that if that's the way they wanted to act, that's up to them.

I worked with them four years and I kind of learned about them. I had learned how they were, so I didn't speak to them anymore. I wouldn't say anymore to them after they didn't speak to me that day. So, from then on when I met them, I didn't speak. So, you know what they did? They had to turn around and speak to me. I was the only Black teacher there for three years. No other Black teacher came. I was there three years before two others came and then they tried to get rid of them. They couldn't stand it. Another Black teacher came and they soon got rid of her. There was about three or four others [Black teachers] who came.

Well, the first PTO [Parent Teacher Organization] meeting was full. They [White parents] were going to come to PTO; you could not even find a seat. You could not even find a parking space within two or three blocks; those parents would be there at Lake Park Elementary School. That first PTO they crowded my room like I don't know what. They introduced me in the main meeting before going out into individual classrooms. I was the only new teacher and the only Black teacher there. I went to the classroom, they came in there and they were just standing around, they were just everywhere. You couldn't get a seat in the classroom. I was standing behind my desk and you know, they asked me questions. One parent asked me, "Well, how do you feel teaching Whites?" I said, "Teaching Whites, teaching Whites, I really hadn't thought about it." I said, "You've given me something to think about." I said, "I never really thought about teaching White children, I see them as children." That's the answer I gave her. I

see them as children. Children are children, to me. So, they didn't say anymore about that.

I had it kind of rough that year. I had it kind of rough. That was my first year there. But I tell you; they respected me quite a bit because the principal or the superintendent had built me up so highly. I am talking about the teachers and the parents at Lake Park Elementary.

Now, some Black students came there during my second year. Lawyer C. B. King sent a bus out there and I never shall forget it. There were about eleven Black children who came out to Lake Park Elementary School on that bus all by themselves. They were from down there in the alley [a slum area where Blacks lived], not clean, no clothes, and very poor. They were so far behind. I don't even think they had gone to any school before. At that time I could not figure out what was going on, I just could not figure it out. But it came to me in later years that he [Attorney King] was trying to show [emphasis] what they had done to Blacks. That's what came to me. He was trying to expose what segregation had done to Blacks. He was exposing the two-tier [so called separate-but-equal] system that existed in public schools. Now, that's what came into my mind.

But each day they came there, I had a bath cloth for each one; I had a toothbrush for each one, a comb and, brush. I had everything ready for them. This was the second year I taught there; they had moved me out of that closed-in room. Now, I was in a room where there were windows, I could see when the bus drove up. So, I stood in my door and I beck [summoned by gesturing with her hand] for

them and I took them right across the hall to the restroom, gave each one their cloth; I had their names on them. [softly and meaningfully spoken] I would have them go in there, wash up, brush their teeth, and ah… bathe, and then bring their things back to me. I had a box to put their things in so I could carry them home, washed them out, and have them ready for them the next day. [speaking very softly] I got my children clothes, still they were not clean, sometime I would go by different one's house, and pick up their clothes in the afternoon, bring them home, wash them, give them back to them, and let them take them back to the parents so they could wear them to school the next day. [speaking even softer now] I ah…I did that all year. I brought them to my house a number of times. I brought them to my house to try and help them some. I really tried to work with them academically and socially, yes, all eleven. They really needed help. [pausing long] If I'm not mistaking, I'm not sure if they came back the following year. That was one year that [long pause] I was so hurt to see them ride up on that bus every morning.

The other teachers paid no attention to them. The other students just went about their business. Maybe one or two Whites tried to befriend those Black students, as I can remember, I don't remember about many of the others. But I know that in my room the White students just acted as though they didn't see them. I really don't know how other teachers received those eleven Black students.

Remember now, they were really not talking to me, except those in my grade group. That second year they got a little closer because they thought I knew what I was doing. Even the principal changed. She thought I was pretty much up to par

and that's when they accepted me more. I worked real hard and that's when the parents accepted me. They moved me into math and gave me two classes of mathematics even though one of the classes was a low group. You know that's unusual because at that time you [Black teachers] couldn't do anything but teach social studies. Black teachers couldn't teach mathematics or science or reading or anything like that; we had to teach social studies. I think this was so because social studies was ah… was really not so important at that time and neither was science. Once upon a time reading and mathematics were the two most important subjects. They usually felt that if you were a Black teacher you were not good enough to teach reading and mathematics.

It was the beginning of my fourth year when other Black teachers finally came, ah…and one of the new Black teachers tried to compete with me. I had already been there three years and I was well known [speaking with much emphasis]. The reason I say she tried to compete with me is because when Christmas came she tried to compare gifts she received from students with those that I had received. I got real nice gifts, very nice gifts, and she said ah… "Oh, wonder why you got so many nice gifts, so many nice ones, and look at mine." Knowing how we are, I just got the idea she was trying to compete, although she was teaching in another grade level.

Now, when I came to Lake Park Elementary School I really didn't mind. I think I really wanted to. I didn't make any special preparations to go to Lake Park. Well, I was already broken-in when I went there because when I went over seas I

was the only Black. There was one other Black teacher I met in Japan but she was very far from the school where I worked. She was a young girl from New York. I saw her only once in a while. The situations in the schools in Japan had prepared me for Lake Park and so it didn't make any difference to me to go out there. I really wanted to go. I was glad to go there. I think I did as good a job in teaching as the White teachers because they moved me from teaching social studies to mathematics. White parents would even ask for their children to be placed in my room for math. Another White lady had been teaching mathematics at Lake Park for many years when parents began requesting that their children take mathematics under me.

In the beginning, White students at Lake Park thought they wouldn't have to work hard for me. But they found out better and they eventually worked extremely hard. I eventually came up with the idea in social studies to let them contract their grade. I had a contract for an A, a contract for a B, and a contract for a C. Also, I had everything listed that was required to get either grade. That's really where I gained the confidence of the parents. I did that because they were such good students and I knew they could really do it. I worked hard on that process though. It was a lot of work. I had to schedule dates for them to complete each assignment.

About class stratification or a Caste System, I never thought I would see that we as Blacks saw each other in terms of skin color. But it's a known fact and it was a common thought if you came from a high-class family, or a certain city

you would fit into a certain class. It was the same way in the classroom; there were little groups. The smart students associated with each other and they grouped together, and the slower ones associated with each other, and they formed groups. The smart students had it made and it seems like the slow students were just pushed aside. I would stay after school and work with the slow students. I would sometimes take them home. Because it just seemed that they were pushed aside. I have always been concerned about those children that didn't have… and who were very low in their performance. I really feel that most Black teachers have care for all students. I really do. I really feel… that is one thing we have. We love children. Black teachers really care for children. Now, some may not reach out as much. They either don't want to…or don't have the time or what ever. Even at Radium Elementary School, when I went there we had some low achieving children, and many times I stayed to school until about five o'clock preparing for the students in my room that were very low achievers. I even took some of them home in the afternoon…I would keep them and work with them. So, in my mind there was a type of Caste System; based on smart students, poor students, low achieving students, and so on. All of that existed in the school system among Blacks. It really did.

Now as far as integration goes, I feel it helped Black students or could have helped them. I do feel that our children really missed out. I feel that at that time…in the beginning, White teachers didn't know what to do. They didn't know how to work with Black children. I feel that they were afraid, just like maybe we

were, at the beginning…they didn't know how far to go with them, or what to say to them, and I feel that we as parents compounded the problem and caused more harm than good. Talking against Whites with such comments as, "You don't have to take what they say. Don't let them tell you what to do. Don't listen to them and don't let them put their hands on you." You know, with that sort of stuff, I feel that we as parents did more harm than good.

At Lake Park Elementary School, I did not have to deal with discipline problems. The students were from elite families and usually most of them acted very well. "Discipline changed during integration. It had to change because it became a policy that you don't touch a child. You can hardly touch a child now. You can't put your hands on one. Whites didn't want Black teachers spanking their children and Blacks didn't want Whites spanking their children. Oh, yes, it was on both sides."

But let me tell you the reason I feel that it may have really helped us. It may have helped in that we started getting the same things they were getting. We were getting the same materials, everything, once we integrated. We were getting what they were getting. But as long as we're not integrated, as long as we are segregated, nothing but Blacks here and Whites there, I will never feel that we will get the same things they will get. I have just always felt that way. As long as we remain segregated in our schools we will never get the things White people get. Separate-but-equal will never work. If we are all in the classroom together, we will get what they get. However, it's up to us to get it. Now, there is one thing I

found out about White teachers. If that Black student would work, they would go all the way with him. But that child back there with no manners, no respect, fighting, don't want to work, just sitting there being very ugly, they really won't work with them. They were ready to put them in special education. Now, that's the way it was when I was teaching, so I really believed integration could have helped us.

I do not believe that White teachers do a better job at teaching than most Black teachers. I feel that we have some good White teachers and some good Black teachers. I've worked with both and I feel that we have some excellent Black teachers. Anyway, I do find that one thing exists; it seems that White teachers have more of a variety of teaching. For example, they can stand and name almost every kind of branch or tree, or plant, or things like that. Where as I don't know much about that, I've never been taught that. The names of different kinds of fish, different kinds of animals, I don't know that. It is really a result of exposure. Blacks have been usually limited to learning only a few things. How many of us have had the opportunity to travel all over the country, or just read a map or something like that? Not that we are dumb, we have just not had the exposure due mostly to racism. Being White has given them an advantage over Blacks in terms of exposure.

My father had a high school education and most of my family members were teachers. But how many Black families were like that? Most were not. We have more families without an education. White families usually have so much

more that they have been exposed to than most Black families. Not that we have less ability, we just have less exposure.

In general, White teachers did not improve education for Black students. Let me put it this way, "We got more after integration." We got more teaching materials; we got mostly what we needed. In one sense, I really feel that we were taught more, because we had more. I tell you another thing about Black students. They will definitely work for White teachers. They would work harder for White teachers than they would for a Black teacher. I feel this is so because they felt comfortable with us. If a White teacher said, "Do fifty problems," they would sit there digging to get the fifty problems done. Whereas if I say do fifty problems, they would say, "Mrs. Smith, can I do just twenty-five." If a White teacher told a student something, they stuck to it. Sometimes I would let the students by and let them off a little easier. But White teachers went strictly by what they said originally, at least with Black students, and those students [Black students] did what she [the White teacher] said. However, I think that this was due to a different level of compassion between White teachers and Black teachers. Black teachers are more compassionate toward Black students than White teachers. That's a part of us.

Well, I feel that the old Black segregated schools were very effective because so many of our Black children didn't get that hugging and loving care after integration that they got in the Black schools. We were very compassionate ah...with our Black children. I think that really made a difference for our Black

children. Quality time for children period, Black or White…has a lot to do with the child's effectiveness as a student. You see, some of our children don't get that from their parents, because some of them don't have the time. But the teacher was with that child more than the parents. We figured out one time when I was at Valdosta State College that parents spend on an average of about four hours of quality time a week with their children and when teachers spend about thirty-five hours a week with a child. Quality time for children period, whether Black or White, is very important for shaping the child's character. It has a lot to do with the child's effectiveness as a student.

I am blessed to have been a schoolteacher. I have always worked hard and I have been pretty lucky in getting teaching jobs. Thirty-one years in the classroom is a long time. I taught a lot and I learned a lot. The principal at Radium Springs Elementary School where I retired said to me, "I wish you really didn't have to go. I am going to miss you and I want you to select the teacher that will replace you." So, I did. She said to me, "I want someone your color." I didn't question what she meant. I don't know if she meant for me to get someone that was my complexion or if she was saying for me to pick another Black teacher. Another thing about me was that I always tried not to take everything so negative or racial.

I visited Mrs. Parker's home on three different occasions, spending about three hours each visit while I conducted the interview with her. I recall that the almost 10 hours we spent together over a three day period seemed like weeks together. I could tell that she very much enjoyed sharing her experiences with me.

I vividly recall as I left her home after our last interview session, she kept telling me that I should return because there was much more that she wanted to share with me regarding her years as a teacher.

It has been about two years since this interview and she continues to be a very active member of the AME Church in Albany where she serves as president of two church auxiliary organizations. She also serves on several civic boards and volunteer organizations within the greater Albany community where she now lives. She still finds time to help in the schools as a substitute teacher and as a parent volunteer worker.

Portrait

Clara M. Hall

Allow me to introduce Mrs. Clara Murray Hall. Mrs. Hall is deeply religious and very active in the Bethel AME Church in Albany, Georgia where she serves on several church boards and auxiliaries. Her marriage to Mr. William Hall produced one son. Today, she spends much of her time working in the church and enjoying quality time with her grand children. Though she is a gentle woman who speaks with a soft certainty in her voice, she was an inspiring educator who taught in three different county school systems in Georgia. Many of her peers referred to her as a superior educator who loved the children she taught.

My name is Clara M. Hall. I am the eleventh child of fourteen children born to Mathis and Ethel Murray, in Randolph County, at Carniga, Georgia, in 1937. That's a little place near Cuthbert, Georgia. There was just one store there. My mother's name was Ethel Wilson Murray and my father was Mathis Murray. They were farmers. They were sharecroppers for a while and then some years later my father rented his land. My grandparents owned the land on which they farmed and lived and when my grandfather died the land was sold. My father continued to rent his land until he retired.

The driving force for me to go to college was the fact that I always wanted to be a teacher. My English teacher influenced me, her name was Mrs. Sykes, and she was a great teacher and a person that I admired. Back in 1955, when I finished high school the only profession that Black people could usually go into was teaching, and of course, you also had the ministry. Professions were very limited for Blacks when I was a child. You didn't find Black people going into other professions because there were no other positions that we felt were available to Blacks. We were just not allowed [by the White establishment] to take on other professions. Living in a segregated society limited Blacks and prevented them from entering most professions in business and industry.

I just loved children because of this teacher [a particular English teacher]. She was just a role model for me. She had the personality, I felt close to her, she made me feel like I was somebody, and she made me feel as if I had the skills to be a teacher. I graduated second in my class. We came from a class of eighteen. There were only eighteen of us [she laughs as she speaks]. At that point I wanted to go to college, and we were farmers as I said, ah…we didn't have that much money. I told my dad I wanted to go to school because I wanted to be a teacher. So that summer after graduation, I went to Valdosta and I got a job working in a motel operating an elevator. I was seventeen and I had just finished high school. I had an uncle who lived in Valdosta so I lived with him that summer, and he helped me to secure a job operating an elevator. I made enough money for my tuition for the first quarter of college and from that point on the second and the third quarter

my dad would borrow money, and with help from my other sisters and brothers I was able to finish my freshman year at college. The summer after my freshman year, I went to New Jersey and I got a job working for a company that made ladies hand bags, a company that hired college students as part-time workers.

So, every summer after that, I would go there and I would get my job, the same job working with the same company. By working in New Jersey each summer I earned enough money for the first two quarters of college every year. And my parents didn't have to worry about anything but that third quarter. In 1960, I finished college and I secured my first teaching job. In fact, my mother got me the job in Arlington, in my hometown where I had graduated. There I taught along with some of the teachers who had taught me, which was an experience because they had always thought of me as "little Clara" and not as an equal [she laughs]. At that point the school was no longer Arlington Vocational High. The school was Arlington Elementary School because the high school had consolidated with all of the other schools in the county. They had only two high schools in the county, one each in Arlington and in Morgan, Georgia. In the other little places like Leary and Edison, they only had elementary schools.

I worked in Arlington. As I said, my mother got me the job in Arlington, but I wanted to leave home. I had gotten a job in Taccoa, Georgia and that's where I wanted to go, I just wanted to get away from home. But my mother knew the principal at home and she got me the job. I told her that I should be able to make my own decisions about my own job. But you know, at that time you didn't argue,

you just went along with what your parents said. So anyway, I worked at the high school there for six years. The same school, but it's now known as Arlington Elementary School.

After the sixth year I met my husband, William "Billy" Hall, and after we were married ah…I moved to Albany. I tried to get employment here [in Albany, Georgia], but I could not. So, I went to Worth County in 1966 because the principal was a friend of my husband. My husband, Billy Hall, was a well-known educator and coach in the Dougherty County School System. So, I got a job at his school. That school was Hillcrest Elementary, and the school was located right in Doerun, Georgia [Doerun is located in Colquitt County but it borders the Worth County line] but Hillcrest was actually located in Worth County. This was in1966 and it was my first experience working in an integrated school. See, Arlington Elementary School was predominately Black; actually, it was all Black. In fact, it was segregated by law during the time I started there as a student. However, in sixty-six [1966], the schools were integrated. Before going to Hillcrest Elementary School I had only taught in Arlington. This was my first experience working in an integrated school. It was integrated with students and teachers. But the principal was a Black man.

You know, it was supposed to have been a sixty-forty ratio overall. However, it was about sixty-forty with the students but not with the teachers. There were more Black teachers…we just had a few White teachers. It was a new experience for all of us, even for the White teachers who came in. I found out later

that they were given hazardous pay [laughing as she speaks]. They were given an extra amount in their paycheck each month and they called it hazardous pay. And I learned that from White teachers after working with them and getting to know them through conversation. Then we found out that they were paid extra money to come to Hillcrest because the school had a Black principal, and the majority of the students were Black. I don't know why they called it hazardous pay unless they were kind of fearful of the situation. But anyway, the extra pay was kind of an incentive for them to come. Although it was mandated that the schools be integrated they [White teachers] didn't want to come. White teachers wanted to work in schools where they had a White principal, and maybe they felt comfortable where there were more White students. But in this school the majority of the students were Black.

The school was located in an agriculture area. A few of the students came from kind of wealthy families but there were more students from lower to medium income families and the majority of the Blacks were farmers, and we had a few students whose parents worked in Albany. So those whose parents worked in Albany were considered as middle-income students. The White students who came from poor families ah... were almost like Black children because their experiences were limited, just like the Blacks. Black students from low economic income families were placed into low academic groups.

We had some Black students whose parents worked on the bases [a huge Air Force base and a Marine Corp Logistics Base located in Albany, Georgia] and

we had some students whose parents worked on other good jobs in Albany. Those students appeared to score higher on tests and usually faired better academically than the very poor students. This meant that they were in the higher academic groups.

During my second year at Hillcrest Elementary, which was in 1967, I asked for a low group because we could request the classes we wanted to teach. So I requested a class of low achievers. I was placed in a classroom with students who scored at the bottom of the totem poll. My greatest challenge during my teaching career was helping those students to achieve who were told they were non-achievers. I discovered that these were students who really wanted to learn and ah…who applied themselves, and I was able to bring them up [raise their academic achievement standing] at least two grades. Well, from the test scores they were brought up two grade levels. They really just needed someone to just believe in them and expect something from them. I always had high expectations from my students. I provided an environment and an experience for them to learn, because every child wants to achieve. So it's up to the teacher to provide an environment in which children can achieve. You can't teach above the child's achievement level. I knew when I asked for that class that those students could learn something. So I started where they were, [pause] and they were at the bottom; I knew that. But I told them, "You don't have to stay there." I told them, "If you work with me we are going to meet the standards that are required for you to move on."

I just made them believe that they could do it and the majority of those students improved about two grade levels. They were in sixth grade but they performed on about a third and fourth grade level in terms of their achievement level. When they were tested at the end of the year, they had moved up. After I worked with them they improved up to fifth and sixth grade levels.

I did have a connection and a relationship with White teachers too. In the beginning the relationship was strictly professional. It was like a standoff, you know, "You keep to yourself and I keep to myself." And then after the White teachers got to know us and we got to know them we all worked well together, see the whole thing was a lack of communication. We got along because we had a principal who instilled in us that we were there for the betterment of the boys and girls.

I believe that all of the teachers, both Black and White, worked hard in that school. You're going to have some that just wait for the paycheck, but I believe the majority of them had the children at heart, and the relationship grew to be a great relationship between Black and White teachers. A lot of that was because of the principal's leadership. My principal always told us, "Don't see kids and don't see each other as Black or White." He had this thing [a quotation he frequently used] he would say, "Everybody is green." And, "We have a job to do, so let's do our job." That attitude became a part of me. Probably others sided-up with their race but my principal treated all teachers the same. I can't say that he showed favoritism toward either race. He told all of us, "We're in this boat together." He

didn't allow for a Caste System or any type of social class system to exist within his school. I never ran across a case where I felt that any type of class system was established within the school; not at Hillcrest Elementary School.

I found that to be the case when I came to Dougherty County [a type Caste System or social class system existed]. But now, the problems I encountered after coming to Dougherty County did not exist at Hillcrest. I had heard other teachers in the other schools in Dougherty County complain that they had problems. I heard that some Black teachers encountered racial problems because they had White principals and White teachers would go to the White principal, and the White principal would side up [take side with or show favoritism towards] with the White teachers against the Black teachers and Black students. But I cannot say this was the case in my school. My principal felt that we had a job to do and we were to do that job, but problems existed in other schools in Dougherty County. This was in the sixties [1960s].

Hillcrest Elementary School integrated in 1966, the year I began working there. Teachers who had worked there prior to school integration stated it was only after school integration took place that we started getting quite a bit more teaching materials at Hillcrest. The only reason they provided everything we needed was because the school was being integrated. We had new books, the school had been renovated when we got there along with the White teachers, you know, I came in with them. The only reason renovation had taken place is because we were integrating the school. I was an advocate of school integration because I believed

that it put everyone in the same boat. By integrating the schools Black children would have access to educational resources that White children had.

They up-graded the school because now Whites would have to attend that school. Oh yes, we had all new books, and that was not the case before schools were integrated. Now it was a different story, altogether different than when I was teaching in Calhoun County. In fact, the curriculum changed because the same curriculum used before schools were integrated was not the same curriculum that was used after integration at Hillcrest, according to the teachers. Prior to integration they didn't have adequate teaching materials at Hillcrest. Naturally, the Black teachers at Hillcrest were just shocked to come back to school and see the changes that had been made over the summer break. There was no comparison with what had happened over the course of all the other years, when teachers had to write information on the board because most of the children didn't have books.

The teacher that I replaced was teaching reading, and she didn't have a basic reader for all the students. She had only three or four different used books because they didn't have enough books to go around. So they just had to make use of whatever they had. The same was true with the spelling books because I taught Language Arts and the spelling books were old used books. I had to move all those old books out when I got there because we had new books as a result of integration. The old English books were altogether different; they had only three or four of one kind and three or four of another kind, and they were actually sent to our school from other White schools. This was happening at Hillcrest

Elementary School and we can go back to my first teaching experience in the all Black school, which was the Arlington Elementary School, and find that the same thing was being experienced in Black schools in and around Arlington where I had just left.

I eventually left Hillcrest in 1976 and came to Albany in Dougherty County. I came to Martin Luther King Elementary School. Although schools were already integrated in Dougherty County, I never worked under a White principal. When I came to Dougherty County, it was a new experience for me. Race was an issue…I had put in several applications in Albany trying to get a job. I had talked to Black principals and White principals trying to get employment.

But, the way I got to Albany is sort of strange. One day in my classroom at Hillcrest I had a strange feeling. I was feeling badly so I went to my principal's office and requested a half-day off. I came directly to the superintendent's office in Albany and I asked him for a job. I told him that I would like to work in a school where the majority of the students were Black. He asked me if I was a racist. I answered by saying, "Aren't we all to a certain extent?" I told him that I just felt that I had something to offer Black students. I felt that there was a special need for Blacks. The reason I had this feeling is because in working with Black teachers and having friends with children in the predominately Black schools here in Dougherty County, and in talking with them I had heard so much about how White teachers were not taking up time with Black students. If you don't expect anything from our students, then your low expectations will not produce anything.

If you have worked with Black children then you know this [pause]. You can't give Black children the opportunity to make too many decisions. You have to tell them what to do. You have to tell them what you expect from them. And you must do it. That's the approach that I took.

Students didn't come to my classroom and tell me, "I don't have any pencil and paper." Therefore, "I can't do any work today." If they came to my room and said, "I don't have any pencil and paper," I would say, "Well, I have some for you," and I provided pencil and paper for them out of my own pocket. But I would tell them, "Today I am going to give you the materials to work with, I am going to give you your pencil and paper." But tomorrow I want you to have your own basic supplies, such as pencil and paper. I just required them to have supplies. I said, "You couldn't go on a job and expect to do a job if you don't have the proper tools to do the job." I spent time talking to my students. In my class you must have your tool. So if they didn't have them, I would just give them what they needed, and nine times out of ten, the next day those children that didn't have their tools at first would now have them.

With White teachers it was just the opposite, if the child came to the classroom without pencil and paper they took the attitude, "Well, you can't work," and they kept on teaching. They would put the assignment on the board and continue right on. And when I got a job teaching in Dougherty County I found that what my Black friends were saying was true. I recall that when I got to MLK Elementary School [Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School], the same thing

together. Then I would print the rules on a poster, I would post the rules on the wall, and then I would post the consequences. I would say, you help to make these rules. Rule number one was always, "We are going to respect each other. I'm going to respect you as students, and then I demand respect from you."

I don't throw my weight around just because I am the teacher. I said, "The mere fact that I am the teacher should let you know who is in charge. So then, I don't have to prove to you that I'm in charge. I am going to respect you and then you are going to respect me. We don't make anyone feel badly in the classroom."

Now, every time I get an opportunity to talk to young beginning teachers I tell them, "You cannot go into the classroom on the first day and put yourself on the same level as the students and then demand respect." I say, "You can't do that." You have made a mistake the day you start playing with students because when you try to become serious with them two or three days later you won't be able to change them, it's difficult. I say to them, "It's easier to lighten up than to go in lightly and then try to tighten up later." I'm thinking that this is what has happened in schools today. Teachers are starting off too easy and not letting students know what is expected of them right away. From experience I believe that if you let a child or children know what you expect, then you do that on the first day of class.

I was never denied a job because of my race. I've had only three jobs, Arlington Elementary in Arlington, Hillcrest Elementary in Worth County, and Martin Luther King Elementary in Albany, Georgia, and I stayed in Albany from

1976 until 1991, the year I retired. I taught many White students after integration. I worked with White kids in Worth County and I worked with White kids at M. L. King Elementary in Albany. White students were bussed to M. L. King Elementary to achieve integration, and they were students from low-income areas. And as far as I know, I know in my classroom they [all children] were all treated the same. I set the standards. I never had any racial problems among students in my classroom. I used the same standards that the principal back at Hillcrest had used. "There is no White and no Black, we're all green, and therefore everybody is going to be treated the same." This is the way I approached education. That worked with the teachers and if it worked with the teachers then it would work with the students. There would be no name calling. There's not going to be any "crackers" and there is not going to be any "niggers" in my classroom.

When I was a student in public schools they had Jeanes supervisors in the schools. Also, the year I came to Dougherty County they had Jeanes supervisors. But the next year they changed the name of the position from Jeanes supervisor to Social Studies Curriculum Director. At that point they were sort of doing away with the Jeanes supervisor. That was in 1977, in Dougherty County. After that time they [the school systems] got different directors. In general, they were called Curriculum Directors. They had a reading director, science director, and so on; they became specialized in particular subjects. I think that most of the Jeanes supervisors were Black. I can't remember seeing a White Jeanes supervisor; the two that I knew were Black. I just can't remember any that were White. They

would come in and observe your teaching, look at your teaching methods, and if they had ideas they would share them with you. They also would evaluate teachers and file the evaluation report with the superintendent's office. I never worked under a Jeanes supervisor but I remember them from the time I was a student in public school.

Now, you have some lazy Black teachers just like you have some lazy White teachers. If it's in you not to do a thing you're just not going to do it. But I must say, across the board there were excellent White and excellent Black teachers. When I was at M. L. King Elementary School, there were White teachers…now there is one thing you have to give the majority [White teachers], when they are working, they come in that classroom and they're going to do the job. Now the method that they used is one that I had a problem with, but I have always said, "If it works, what's wrong with it?"

This is what they would do, I have observed it over the years, the majority of them would come in the afternoon after their classes were finished and they would put all of their in-class work and other assignments on the chalkboard before leaving school. They would also put the homework assignments for the children on the board before leaving school. They would put the mathematics on the board, the social studies, the science assignments, and the page numbers from each book. For example, whatever they were going to do in social studies; all of this would be done in the afternoon. They had the board full of stuff. In the mornings when they started teaching they would go over the mathematics, if that

first class was mathematics, and then give all the examples or other notes. They would also do the same thing with the science…and they would pile it all on our students at one time. Now this didn't work with me because when the majority of the students see a whole lot of work at one time they get excited. "We have to do all of this today [the students would ask]?" My teaching method and that of other Black teachers was, if mathematics was our first class, then mathematics was put on the board and then we would teach math. Then we would erase the math and if our next subject was spelling, we would put our spelling assignment on the board. Then we went through the spelling assignment and completed that work.

But the majority of the White teachers put all their work on the board and did all of their explaining in one block of time. Everything was put on the kids at once. And when that child finished that math then he moved on to spelling, when he finished the spelling he had to go on to the science. So, all of her teaching was done in one block of time. I thought that that was the number one reason why we had children failing under White teachers. They [Black students] got carried away when they saw all that work. You can't put too much before them. But that is what White teachers would do. On two or three different times I was the lead teacher and advisor for the fourth grade. We had five or six fourth grade sections and we would have meetings to discuss our problems. If there were problems that we were having on the fourth grade hall the lead teacher would take those problems to the principal. So, I called this to the attention of my principal. For example, when we had a lot of students failing we had to explain what was going on and answer the

question, "Why were all of the students failing?" And it was at this point that I called it to the attention of the principal and discussed the teaching methods of the majority of the White teachers.

I really think that there was good teaching going on in the old segregated Black schools. It had to be [laughs hardily] because we didn't have anything to work with but we were still able to succeed. We were still able to achieve. It had to be because back then you had fifth, sixth, and seventh graders all in one classroom. Back then, in the old Black schools, teachers took on more of a surrogate parent role and that was good for our Black students. As I said, "We knew our students and we knew what they needed. Now, you know that we are…particularly Black teachers [pausing briefly then continuing], we are just strict disciplinarians."

Discipline changed once integration took place. Black hands and White hands of teachers disciplining students were tied after integration took place. Really, White parents didn't want Blacks putting their hands on their children and the same was true for some Black parents. But I think this "hands-off" attitude was more prevalent among White parents. Therefore they came up with the rule, "no corporal punishment." The idea became, "Let the principal handle it." But if the principal was Black, then he couldn't whip a White child unless the parents gave him permission. My Principal at Hillcrest would call the parents to come and get the child and the parent would come to school, and take the child home.

Now, I must say, we just didn't have disciplinary problems with as many White children as we did with Black children. White students were usually more disciplined; White kids would tell you, "My daddy will give me stars and stripes forever if I misbehave." The only thing you had to do was to mention calling their fathers, and they would get in line. With Black kids you had to show them, you just really had to show them [laughs]. The key to any discipline problems is to keep students busy. If you show me a classroom where there isn't anything going on as far as teaching, then I can show you one out of control.

I believe that integration has plusses and minuses. I believe that it helped us in that it put all of us in the same boat. And the only way…there is no such thing as separate-but-equal, you know. The only way that you [Black people] are going to get what the White man has is you are going to have to be with him and keep your eye on him. That's the only way. As far as getting the things that we need and exposing our students to better working conditions and materials, integration was a plus because otherwise, there is so much we would not have gotten with this separate-but-equal law.

We lost a lot by integrating schools. After schools integrated they [school administrators and others in control] started telling us what to teach, how to teach, and when to teach. Everything became so rigid it did away with the individuality of the teacher. That to me was a minus. And another thing that we lost was discipline over our children because White teachers were kind of lenient and we were firm. We had our children under control. We lost some of that control once

the schools were integrated. The rules of discipline changed under integration. Black teachers had a more nurturing attitude toward Black children. If our children didn't have...we gave, and if a child had a problem we helped. We had kids coming to school with no shoes, or ragged shoes, or hair not combed, and faces not washed, so we just took them in the bathroom and washed their face. We just combed their hair if it needed it.

Black teachers had a closer relationship with the children and Black students felt close to Black teachers. I guess it's because Black children believed that they could relate to us better. That's the reason I have a problem now with White counselors in all Black schools or where the school is predominately Black. Now do you think that a Black child with a problem is going to discuss that problem with the White counselor? Even if they did, the White counselor wouldn't be as attached or couldn't relate to the deeper needs of that child like a Black counselor could; someone who really knows the struggle of Black people. However, the White counselor probably could make the adjustment, as an adult.

Well, it all depends on the home or the environment of the child. We as Black parents sometimes talk negative about Whites. Then our attitude is passed on to the child. Therefore, the child wouldn't feel comfortable sharing his problems with a White counselor and the same is true about the teacher. I have had cases where children would come to me and tell me things about what's going on in their homes and I would talk to those children and counsel them. I could counsel the child from the perspective of a Black loving parent. Sometimes you

get positive feedback and sometimes it's negative. Many students bring their problems to the schoolteacher. Black teachers would show more concern in addressing the needs of Black students.

I worked thirty-one years as a public school teacher. I succeeded with hundreds and hundreds of children and I enjoyed it until my last year, because of that new generation of undisciplined students. Overall, my educational experiences were fulfilling. I enjoyed working with children because I love children. I could relate to children because I needed them and they needed me. I let each child know from day one that he or she was important. I had expectations for my students. I respected my students as students and I demanded respect from them. I taught them first to respect themselves and to respect others.

I started day one [the first day of class] as I expected to end day 180 [the last day of class]. I had classroom rules and made sure each student understood the rules, and the consequences if the rules were not followed. I am very proud that I provided opportunity for children to succeed at something. Every child can learn but children learn at different rates. If you don't expect anything from students you will not get anything from them. If you set high expectations and be firm but fair, then you will have a successful teaching career.

Mrs. Hall still enjoys life actively working in her church and serving on several volunteer organizations within her local community. She says that she still loves children and spends much of her time enjoying and helping to raise her

grandchildren. She believes that if she could start her life over again and choose a career, she would choose to be an elementary school teacher.

Portrait

Mary Shy Scott

Allow me to introduce Mrs. Mary Shy Scott. She is a very graceful and charming retired schoolteacher who retired from the Atlanta, Georgia City School System. Mary Shy Scott is very dignified, exceptionally bright and very knowledgeable of Atlanta's Public School System and its struggle with school desegregation. Mrs. Scott is extremely articulate and pronounces words with great clarity and expressiveness.

As a dedicated member and steward at Allen Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church in Atlanta, she is extremely active in church activities and in the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority at both the local and national level. Mrs. Scott is a retired activist. Retiring in 1987, she still travels around the country and speaks to various groups regarding the importance of education. Some of her current projects include writing and compiling notes and memos about the struggles involved in desegregating the Atlanta Public School System, which she intends to publish in the form of a book. Mrs. Scott is gravely concerned about the position and level of commitment of teachers and administrators in public education in Georgia at present.

I am Mary Shy Scott. I am a native of Atlanta, Georgia, and I taught 33 years in the Atlanta Public School System. My mother's name was Flora Stillman Shy and my father's name was Robert Shy, Senior; they came to Atlanta after they were married. She came from Shadyville, Georgia, and he came from Newborn, Georgia. I have a brother, Robert Shy, Jr., who lives in New York. I have a sister who lives in Stone Mountain, Georgia, and her name is Doris Shy Frazier.

We grew up in Atlanta during the totally segregated era of our early lives. We had parents who were very positive about what we ought to do in terms of setting life goals. But we also had other relatives; I had an uncle who ah… taught at Paine College in Augusta, Georgia, when I was young and he finally became Bishop Peter Shy. He insisted that from time to time my father let us follow him around, so we got very early glances at what education could do. My mother had been a teacher but she stopped teaching to rear her three children. My father was a businessperson and moved around quietly in a time when it was not good for Blacks in business in Atlanta or anywhere else in the South, and in many parts of the North. He really was the kind of businessperson you see now on the cover of magazines. Because of my parents, we made it through and we were all educated.

I wanted to be a teacher because so many of my family members were teachers and because ah…my uncle, Peter Shy, was a teacher and a preacher before ever thinking about being a bishop. Also, my mother had been in education. Kelly Shy, was a first cousin, who taught in the Atlanta Public School System at what was then Young Street Elementary School, it's gone now. Oh…everything

was segregated at the time I'm telling you about. This was when we were about five, six, or maybe seven years old, and this was around 1938, or somewhere close to then. Schools were definitely segregated back then and they stayed that way even after I became a teacher in 1950. That was a long [holding the word long] span of time that we are talking about. We were students at Edwin P. Johnson Elementary School, which is located on Martin Street in Summerhill [Summerhill is a Black community in the Southeast section of Atlanta].

"Let me describe the makeup of Atlanta to you during that era. At that time there were only four places in Atlanta where African Americans lived. There was Summerhill, which is located over in the South part of Atlanta. Then there was the middle part of Atlanta where David T. Howard High School still stands. Once E. P. Johnson Elementary School was up there but it's gone now. The middle part of Atlanta was called ah…the fourth ward. I don't know how it came to be called the fourth ward; undoubtedly the council people decided it was the fourth ward. The third area for Blacks was along what is now Martin Luther King Drive and it stretched down from the middle of Atlanta in a southwesterly direction to what was then called Gordon Street, and along the area where Washington High School is located. The fourth area where Blacks lived was out in the Pittsburgh area. If you were from Atlanta and you were Black then you lived in one of those four places."

Blacks had definite schools that they attended. We attended Edwin P. Johnson Elementary School and I think that I can give credit to my wanting to

teach…to my mother [pausing briefly], and to Peter, and to Kelly, because I saw each of them doing their education piece. My mother did hers at home with us. We had home schooling before there was such a formal term, as we know it today. Education was definitely important in my household. I grew up around educators and I think that played a significant role in my becoming an educator. I started taking music about age four or five and I really wanted to be a concert pianist. [speaking with much emphasis] "My parents didn't stop me they let me have music…I went to Spelman College in Atlanta as a music major potentially, and I was going to go wherever it took me." In the interim, I became a music teacher, rather than a concert artist and it paid off because music was my first love, and I certainly enjoyed the music education field.

Let me tell you about the three Black schools I attended. I had to come from my elementary school to go over in the fourth ward to a junior high school to attend the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades. Once we finished there, the only high school in Atlanta for Black Americans was Booker T. Washington High. So, we had to get on busses or our parents got us there. Back then there was no bus service like my grandchildren have now.

At that time we had trolley cars [laughing] but they got us where we needed to go. I could just walk up to the corner from Booker T. Washington High, get on the trolley and it would take me to town, then I would get on the one that took me across town, and I thought nothing about it. The trolley was a public transportation system in Atlanta and it got us everywhere we wanted to go. However, before that,

we knew how to walk places when we had to. So, those Blacks who graduated from the E. P. Johnson Elementary School and had to go to David T. Howard [high school], walked. These schools were in Black neighborhoods so we didn't pass any White schools along the way. There were many White schools in Atlanta but they were not near us. We were totally [emphasizing the word totally] segregated. I knew where the White schools were, but we couldn't go to them. [speaking quickly] 'We didn't even think about it really. We were so nurtured by the [Black] teachers who taught us, we just did not think about it at that time.

We were happy kids, we were well taught, we had teachers in the classroom that nurtured us and taught us our own history. Much of what they taught us wasn't printed in our books but they told us who we were. So, we felt real good by the time the teachers and our parents got through letting us know that we were "somebody." Then every holiday, particularly during Veterans' Holiday, the fifth grade teacher at E. P. Johnson Elementary read to us and told us about Black Americans who had given their lives for their country. She would often read to us about our freedom struggle and other noble causes undertaken by Blacks. We thought we were "somebody," you know. My generation didn't really feel it and appreciate it until we got into the system ourselves and were able to see what our teachers had gone through; so we became fighters [she lets out a hardy laugh].

The old segregated schools did an excellent job of teaching Black children. But we lost some of the nurturing as a result of integration. We did not have adequate books and other educational materials, but there again, I keep telling you,

we didn't feel it. We felt that we were getting an education and we were because of the creativity of those ladies who taught us. They brought in materials from their own homes, they purchased materials and therefore, we were exposed to such great Blacks as Langston Hughes, early in our lives. You must understand, we didn't have a whole lot of books about him in the library, as a matter of fact, for a while at E. P. Johnson Elementary School, I don't remember having a library, but we had teachers who had everything we thought we needed and they taught us.

Now what were some of the shortcomings? First of all, during the time I was in elementary school in Atlanta, schools had double sessions. That meant that part of our children went to school from eight to twelve noon, and then they went home because that was considered a full day of education for the students. Then another group of children came from twelve to four. So, we had two different sessions and one teacher taught those two sessions. So, you can see how strong [emphasizing her words] the teachers were at that time to be able to live under that kind of teaching load and yet prepare students who could go out into the world, and operate productively. When we went to junior high school, we didn't have double sessions but again, we had creative teachers who looked at the required curriculum and saw to it that we got what we basically needed.

My generation ended up at Booker T. Washington High at the time the fellows were coming back from World War II. So, I ended up in a class with about 500 graduates because the government paid for veterans to come back and go to school. They were a support for us because most of them were very mature; they

didn't frighten us, and we felt very confident with them. I finished Booker T. Washington High in 1946, and I felt very well educated.

We did not have supplies that we ought to have had in our schools. We had books from the White schools. Our teachers didn't have to tell us the books we got were used because I could read the names of other students written in them and the names of other schools that were stamped in them. I knew which White high schools the books came from because they were stamped. For a long time [many years] we didn't have the kind of materials that we really needed because when I began as a new music teacher in 1950, I noticed my music books came from the White high school. Young children I trained to become creative and perform in public got their majorette suits from the White high school where little White girls had worn them or smelled them up. They didn't even clean them before sending them to us. [accentuating her voice as she speaks with great emphasis], "This was in Atlanta, Georgia." I was just very antagonized and very upset about it. So, I found a seamstress in the Edgewood Community where I taught and she made majorette uniforms for us. Unlike what we would do now, back then my principal was too intimidated to tell the "Ira Jira" [mocking the old segregationist and matriarch of the Atlanta School Board, Superintendent Ira Jarrell] who was superintendent of schools, that we didn't want those old used suits. But she gave me enough leeway so that when our little girls went to the big bowl game, which was sponsored by the Atlanta Public School System, we had on spanking brand-new clean [emphasized clean] uniforms.

I went to Spelman College knowing all along that I was going to be a music educator or a person in music, somewhere along that line. Prior to attending Spelman College my parents, particularly my father, wanted me to attend Paine College in Augusta, Georgia, where my grandmother had finished. As a little girl growing up and being very active in the church, they allowed me to speak at various church programs, so I became a little public speaker. I wanted to go to Spelman College to get the kind of training I needed in that area and in music education. So my father relinquished the notion of sending me to college where my grandmother attended and allowed me to attend Spelman College. I had a double major and as graduation time approached, I was not really sure at that point how much music training I was going to continue to pursue because I loved teaching English as well.

When I finished Spelman College in 1950, I went immediately into a teaching job. Before I graduated, I was offered a job in the Atlanta Public School System. I had done my student teaching in English at Booker T. Washington High to get a feel for where I really wanted to go and of course you know that was back home for me [she laughs happily]. However, I felt the need for our boys and girls to have someone who could teach them to (quote unquote) "speak correctly." So, immediately following graduation from Spelman College, I went to Atlanta University and got the certification I needed in English and then I went to New York University the rest of my life [smiling as she speaks]. I'm still going there to get renewal courses in addition to my Master's. I did postgraduate work at New

York University and at this point I hold a life certificate in the Atlanta School System. I am also certified to teach reading because I went back to college and got a reading certificate knowing that in order to provide what our children needed, we [teachers] needed to be certified in three or four skill areas. But basically, I was a music specialist.

I didn't go to the University of Georgia because I couldn't. It was not integrated. I am publishing a book very soon and that's been a bold piece that I am writing about [school integration]. The big piece in my book is how this state educated me at the Master's Degree and the post Masters level. I lived right down the street from Georgia State University, but I couldn't go there to get the Master's Degree because of the color of my skin. So the state of Georgia paid my transportation, paid my housing, paid my fees to go to New York University, and they continued to pay for my education until 1968. This was a program from the State Department of Education for which I made application. As long as you were a state of Georgia resident, you could get money to further your education and I got it to go off to a major university that would accept me because I couldn't attend any in Georgia.

So, I was really prepared to teach when I entered the classroom as a public school teacher. Immediately upon graduation, I took a teaching position at Bethune Elementary School in Atlanta; however, at that time it was called Davis Street School. We didn't have all of these big sweet names that represented African Americans who influenced our lives, so schools were usually named after

the streets they were on. See, there was the Crozzman Elementary School, which is gone now, and we had a Walker Street School; they were all named after streets, basically. It was some time later when the Atlanta Public Schools had to make a turn around they started putting our names on schools and thus we had the Bethune Elementary School. But I started teaching at the old Davis Street School, and of course, it was an all Black segregated school. I taught there two terms. I was a young college graduate who had just gotten married and so I took a maternity leave after my first year there. I took off a year and a half and had my daughter who now teaches in the Atlanta Public School System. When I returned to teaching, I went to Wesley Avenue Elementary School, which is located way out in Edgewood. Wesley Avenue School was another one of those schools named after a street. I taught there seven years.

In Black schools, I saw more committed teachers…and I want to say this clearly for the record, at that time, I saw more committed African Americans, teachers and students, than later when we integrated. As I said a minute ago I was fortunate enough to be a student and a teacher in Atlanta during segregation and integration, respectively. I was a teacher during the segregated years and I was teaching when the proposed (quote unquote) "change came." Teachers who taught during my generation were totally committed and parents were totally committed to educating their children, even if they had no idea what teachers and school administrators were talking about. Parents of Black children really supported the education of their children. I have walked into many alleyways to visit my

students' parents, and that is what they were then, alleyways. These were unpaved streets where our people lived. When we walked into a parent's house at nine o'clock at night and told those parents about their child causing problems, that child had a problem. That's what we had going for us.

Now what were teachers like? I recall how teachers were viewed when I was a student in the public schools of Atlanta, Parents looked up to teachers, and children looked up to teachers as well. If a teacher walked into a church in the community and if it were discovered that he or she was a teacher, then that individual was looked upon as something special and so it helped teachers to keep their commitment level high, you see. It was not like the latter part of my career when I saw teachers so beaten down and I'm still seeing that because I'm in the mist of them yet. These days teachers are so beaten down by the system, number one, and by the children who cannot be disciplined, until they don't even want to teach anymore, and that's sad. That's why I said to you up front, I'm saddened now because we've just about come full circle with school integration and I'm worried about what I see.

Back then…[speaking forcefully with emphasis on each word] the teacher was something very special in the Black community. Yes, teachers [Black teachers] were very, very pleased with themselves. I know Black teachers felt that they were professionals and they were dedicated to the teaching profession. I was a member of the professional organizations for teachers when I taught. Music Education, Educators National Group, and I was a member of The Georgia

Association of Teacher Educators Association, all of those. I was also a member of the NAACP, which is not a professional educators' group. However, in the time just before we integrated, Black teachers could not be a member of the NAACP and let the Atlanta Public School System know it. They would fire you! I am a victim of that. We knew how to go under the table and hide our membership, but we were still members, and many of us were brave enough not to hide our membership. I felt I could teach anywhere.

Oh, we had discipline problems in Black schools before integration. Oh, we had them because they were children. But we had the support of the parents, and that's a big piece in what I feel is wrong today. There was no such thing as my going to see a parent and saying, "Johnny acted up in school today," and then the parents say, "Well I don't know what to do with him." There was no such thing. I think a good question to ask is, "What was it like to discipline our students at that time?" It was excellent. Parents supported you, and it was safe in the community. My husband and I were both teachers at the same time. He began teaching in high school right out of college, and I began in elementary school. After we fed our baby in the evenings, we felt free to go into the community and meet with parents. Sometimes it was dark, but we weren't afraid; all we had to do was walk down the street and everybody would shout, "Hi, Mrs. Scott," hi, Mr. Scott." It was just that close-knit kind of thing between the community and those of us who taught school. But we had some discipline problems.

Let me give you an example of just one. "I was always the mothering kind of person and so my children knew that I loved them but they knew also that I was momma, and if they did not get their lesson or if they disobeyed their parents, then they broke a pact between us. They were mine first of all." To give you another good example, not long ago I went to court for jury duty and as I walked down the hall, I saw a group of judges in their big long black robes, [speaking softly] so I tipped toed by, and I heard one of them say… "Mrs. Scott," and there in that robe was Judge Clarence Cooper, whom I taught at West Avenue Elementary School in the sixth grade. He stopped his original conversation with the other judges to tell them, and I felt so good… "This is the lady who is responsible for my being here because in sixth grade she got to my backside when I acted up in class." I can recall his parents and I talked about it, so when he got home, you know his mother took care of business too" [also, his mother spanked him]. I taught him in a situation where I was not only the music teacher; I also had to teach reading and English. I was serious about Clarence Cooper learning to read, and I was going beyond the call of duty in teaching the curriculum. He made it and I could name several students like that. Before integration, Black teachers had coping skills that were powerful and that allowed them to survive under unequal and less than favorable conditions in education.

We had a teacher at David T. Howard, a Mr. Reeves, who first had the thought that we ought to integrate schools because he knew that even the pay scale for those of us who were young Black teachers in Atlanta was completed different

from the salary scale of Whites that were at the same level of teaching. So, he stopped teaching and sued the Atlanta Public School System. [On November 26, 1941, William H. Reeves, a native of Atlanta, and a teacher of Latin and English in the David T. Howard Junior High School of Atlanta, filed a petition with the Atlanta School Board seeking equalization of Black teachers' salaries with those salaries paid to white teachers in the system (King, 1941)]. White teachers and Black teachers were paid differently at that time; White teachers were paid more than Black teachers. The same was true for principals. But a few years after Mr. Reeves' lawsuit, public schools started publishing the total salary scale at each level for each degree and the number of years of teaching experience that teachers had. That's when we found out there were different levels of pay based on race. It was after Mr. Reeves sued the school system.

The next step was that we had a group of youngsters come in and kind of pushed through SNCC [Student Nonviolence Coordinating Committee], which was a civil rights organization formed in 1960 dedicated to overturning segregation in the South by using nonviolent tactics such as "sit-ins". The organization was headed by Stokley Carmichael and Ella Baker, and openly protested racism throughout the South] and other human rights organizations, which got the civil rights ball rolling all over Atlanta. Finally, we had the right to say that we needed to be integrated. One of the first things the Atlanta Public School System did was to elect a Black superintendent, Dr. Alonzo Crim; he was the first African American superintendent of the schools in Atlanta.

Now, before that, in a small interim, the court demanded that we desegregate the classroom. So, how were they going to do it? And when I say "they," I mean the White teachers, politicians, and other community leaders. They did not want us to desegregate. Everybody should have sense enough to know that based on his or her actions. So, when the decree came down we were to desegregate at the high school level first. Thus, one of the little girls that I had taught at Wesley Avenue Elementary was the first child to go to Roosevelt High School, which was a White school located out on Memorial Drive. Of course, when she went into the school to integrate, I still had frequent contact with her, and the first assignment she was given was an assignment such that there was nothing in the books at school that could help her. So, we had to run all over Atlanta and Georgia to help find resources so she could write her paper. But she persevered and she is a fine young woman now.

Well, by the time two or three other Blacks were in the other White high schools and persevering under difficult times, they had to integrate the staff. I was not happy with the integration process because I had seen so much that had made me very confident that our children were not going to get what they needed from the other side [tapping the table to reinforce and make her point as she spoke]. What am I talking about? I'm talking about [speaking of herself] this little girl, first of all. I'm talking about the fact that I had gone to New York and spent some time looking at PS138 [public school # 138] in Manhattan and seeing what our children had to endure there, and that was New York! Seeing that even in New

York, where we were supposed to be so free, all of our children were sent to the community college; Now, here I am in the deep south in Atlanta, so I knew we were in trouble with school integration.

My own perspective was, "Give us the materials we need, give us what we need in terms of our teachers and let us keep our kids going." So, I was not really ready for school integration and how they did it. Here's how they did it. They assigned each teacher three or four numbers, and then they put numbered balls [a type of lottery] into a machine and drew them out, and a teacher was chosen if the numbers on the ball drawn matched the numbers previously assigned to the teacher. That's how they decided if a teacher would be reassigned to integrate a particular school. Well, mine was one of the first to be chosen, I didn't go to work that day, this is my perspective, because I knew that when I got ready to teach that White child music [choral singing], I was in trouble because the White music directors had already told me, "you sound too heavy." They wanted us to change our children's tonality and I was not going to do it. That's our countenance. We have a heavy alto. We even have a very…almost heavy soprano, unless one's voice is at a more mature level, and you don't find that in children. So, it was my perspective and my philosophy…I'm not going to teach my children to sing like your children. If we mix the children, then lets use music that everybody can read and do what the music says do. So, that was my problem and concern. But I was well known in the Atlanta schools for speaking out so they did not send me to a

White school. They let me stay right where I needed to stay [laughing], where I was.

So, I never taught [never permanently assigned as a full-day teacher] in any of the integrated public schools, but I took part in integrated music workshops. I knew we were in trouble because when I took my children to the integrated concerts, I know we were not going to be measured fairly against White schools by the White evaluators. I knew my children were not going to come out a winner. But I saw a miracle; I saw some Black music teachers train our children to sound exactly like the Caucasian choirs. You could not have listened to them on tape and known the difference. I have no idea why this was so or what was going on. I don't know why they did it. I really feel that music is music and it has qualities, resonance qualities that are different. I even had a supervisor who said to me, "We didn't sound right, and she couldn't deal with my children and me."

About 1968 or 1969, I formed an eighty-voice Atlanta Chorus with the Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA) Sorority and we traveled throughout the country singing. One of the AKA Sorority members who was in the same thought pattern as I, had us give a concert during the morning at Walter White Elementary School, which is located over on Detroit Avenue and she invited the music supervisor who was White. After the concert she [the White music supervisor] said to me, "The music was fairly good but the altos were to loud, they were too resonant." Now, in these days where we are doing gospel music as we are [Black contemporary gospel], she would die out of stress. But even back then, I felt that there was a

difference because of the way I had worked with the kids in dance school in New York. My father had White friends and their daughters and I were good friends, and we talked differently, our voice patterns were different but I knew how to speak (quote unquote) "good English." So, ah...it was very, very difficult for Blacks back then.

Now, in that I never taught in an integrated classroom, that also tells you that we never really had true integration within the Atlanta Public School System. We had segregation within what we called an integrated school system. They were tracking children then and they are still tracking children now. I speak across the country and I try to make parents aware that there is such a thing as tracking. What happened in Atlanta was many young Black children became part of the special education concept because they were tracked. So, we had to acquaint the kids' parents with the problem.

Then they came up with the educational term "resource room." Now, in the minds of many parents I have talked with, they thought the term "resource room" meant, "This is a room where my baby is going to get all kind of new learning materials." They didn't realize it was an education concept used for special education children. We are still talking to parents to help them understand that they can't let their child get tracked. Presently, our Black principals are marvelous, so parents should go to the school and sit with administrators and find out what is going on with their children. Early in my career White superintendents and White

school boards intimidated Black principals. They [referring to Black principals] had to do certain things to appease White superintendents.

I worked under one principal at Wesley Avenue Elementary and I guess I have always been pretty militant because of my family. Some of my father's work was getting Black gentlemen moved by bus from various counties, including the county where he was reared, to Atlanta, in order to get out of racial trouble. Many of them along with their children are still living up north in places such as Cincinnati and Toledo. So, I was always aware of the inequity we suffered as Black people. When we went once or twice to those two cities for what the Black church called homecoming, there had been lynchings, and my parents carried me so I would be aware of what went on.

Recently, the newspaper, in Morrow, Georgia, [one of the metropolitan Atlanta townships located adjacent to and South of the Atlanta City limits] made a big "to-do" over the last couple that was lynched and hanged down below Lithonia, Georgia. I did not go but I was very aware of it and very astounded when some forty years later they finally held a commitment program and placed a granite stone there as a memorial. I can't believe it took all this time to erect a memorial such as that. So, I think what I am saying is that the principals of that day suffered intimidation in order to keep their jobs. When I was a novice teacher, I recall hearing our school superintendent call teachers on the telephone and those ladies [the teachers] would literally shake in their boots. She [Ira Jarrell, the school

superintendent for Atlanta's schools] would call the school and the principals would become so nervous.

I experienced racism even though I taught in all Black schools. I was also an itinerant music instructor after integration and I taught some classes in some integrated schools that had previously been all White. But we integrated schools because we had to [court mandated], plus the fact that many communities were changing as Whites moving out and African Americans were moving in; consequently, we had almost a dual type of staff within our schools. Schools in Atlanta had to integrate because we were separate but not equal. The "equal" was the problem. We were not equal but we were helped by a court system that understood we had to desegregate in order to get our fair share. Many of those who did the fighting for the Atlanta School System are still pretty much at it. When we integrated schools and some of my students went to North Side High [a White high school] the story was really told. In the Science laboratories they had every piece of equipment they could ever think they might need. At Booker T. Washington and our other Black high schools teachers had to be creative. They were getting their science lessons with far less equipment than they should have had and that was really the story that was told. So, I think equality is the key.

I taught with White teachers who did not want me to use certain rooms at school and of course, they did not know I was as militant as I was when they tackled me. When I say tackle, I mean they would run to the principal. First of all, they said I caused a White teacher to retire, because when she told me to get out of

a classroom that I was teaching in…I didn't. It was an empty room and I was using it to teach dance, I was a dance teacher too, I did operettas, I taught and wrote full-scale plays, and I directed them and put the music to them. The principal was a Black man and he had given me permission to use an empty room since there were not enough children to fill the school at that time. So, I had chosen an empty room to use for my students. A White teacher who was across the hallway looked over and saw me, and then told me I couldn't use that room. Of course, I said to her that I was going to use the room because I had permission to do so. She went to the principal to report me. Now of course, I didn't have to move. She didn't know that I had previously gotten permission to choose an empty classroom and use it. This incensed her so she quickly retired.

Our Black communities certainly had a type of Caste System or social groups [laughing hardily] based on a lot of little things. There was a system in the Black community that differentiated within in our communities and it determined where we would go, and how far we could go in many instances. But we had parents of brown skin children like my parents were who fought very hard to say no-no-no-no to any type of social grouping. Consequently, you would see many poor or very dark skinned children right where you saw the others [upper-class and or light complexion children]. Many times we were not really wanted in certain places, but we were there and we had been taught how to sustain our place. On the other hand, there were several people who "could" have belonged to those

top echelons that we are speaking of but didn't believe in social-class grouping. So, the community in our culture was pretty much together.

I never worked under Jeanes supervisors. They had them in rural schools located in the county but I worked in the city schools. Jeanes supervisors played an instrumental role in Black education. I did not work under what they called trustees either, but I have heard about them and I had friends who worked under the concept of trustees. We didn't have them here in Atlanta.

White teachers did not improve education for Black students. And let me tell you something else about them, right after we drew the lottery, many Whites left Atlanta; [much emphasis placed on each of the following words], this is a fact! So, many White teachers left the Atlanta School System that we had to advertise as a system and they hired Whites that came down the highway and got these jobs. I worked with several of them in the schools where I taught. My husband employed several White teachers at the school where he was a principal. The Atlanta School System almost became all Black because so many White teachers left. If we look at the records and do a little research downtown we could find out the large percentage of White teachers who left the Atlanta School System after the desegregation lottery was drawn. They were not going to teach Black children. It was not that they had to go into the Black community; "they did not want to teach our children."

White teachers were not better teachers than Black teachers were. Many of them were much more incompetent than some of the Black teachers. We had

several [White teachers] who came into the system and wanted to show movies all day. My personal opinion, it was a strategy to keep that first, second, and third grade Black child from being able to read and move up the scale. [distinctly projecting each word] "They did not want to teach our children." If this must be documented further, I can get a few principals who I think are bold enough to talk about it. There are many principals and I know one personally who finally decided that when classes were assigned at the first of the year, he was not going to let certain White teachers teach below fourth grade because he had documented the number of White teachers that just wanted to show movies in class. He had to say to them, "No more movies. How are you going to use these movies? Put it in your lesson plan and show me how it relates," it didn't. So, it was a strategy they often used.

Even after court ordered desegregation, many public schools in Atlanta were still segregated, and still are today. How long has it been since the court ordered schools to desegregate? You can go on Detroit [a certain street in Atlanta] right now; you've got an all Black public school. Go over the hill here and at the corner, you've got Woodson, an all Black school! My point is, I can name ten schools right now…since that period and now it's 2002, you can still walk into some schools and the whole school is Black, right here in Atlanta, Georgia. Now, where are the White children? When it was decided by the courts that we had to integrate the schools, all kinds of private schools popped up for the Whites. The joke [irony] of it is for those of us who watched it happen found that pretty soon

there were enough African Americans moving into Atlanta and the surrounding areas with enough money to send their children to those private schools. So, now we have Black children in those private schools.

Additionally, many White parents left Atlanta. Once there was a sign where I live now that read, "This is White Property," and it indicated an area that extended from the corner right down below our church [Allen Temple A. M. E. Church] near Douglas High School and reaching about seven blocks to the north. So, in order to get to the lot where we built our house we had to go through the area designated, "This is White property." But when we built on our side adjacent to that area, what did that do? All those Whites moved out and the whole community became Black. They flew [speaking of White flight] from Atlanta to Decatur, to Marietta, to Stone Mountain, to Forsyth, and even to Augusta. Atlanta has been so transformed now that we are everywhere they are.

It has nothing to do with Atlanta but what is so interesting now is the Dekalb County School System, which is located just next door to Atlanta, has fought integration all these years, and they have recently been back in court to attempt to settle complaints involving certain school desegregation issues. In fact, they recently hired their first Black school superintendent, a gentleman from Alabama.

A distinct advantage for me was that eventually they pulled me from my assigned classroom at the Black school and assigned me to teach music at several schools [some were integrated] in Atlanta. In the Atlanta area, I taught at about 12

different schools [pausing for a while] during my tenure as a public school teacher and so I was able to get a picture of not just one site in the system but several sites. I stayed 33 years… [pause] before I retired in 1987.

The interview I conducted with Mrs. Scott was held at her church in Atlanta, Georgia. As I departed after spending roughly one half of a day with her, It was clear to me that she was still very active as she prepared to take charge of some affairs as Minister of Music for her church and attend several meeting that were scheduled over the next two days. As I departed, I could vividly perceive the intense passion she held for the teaching profession and students she taught for more than thirty years. I was greatly impressed by her distinctive deportment.

Portrait

Mattie H. Smith

Allow me to introduce Mrs. Mattie Smith. Mrs. Mattie Smith was 79 years old and had been retired 20 years at the time of the interview. Mrs. Smith has aged remarkably well, bearing a small frame that rises only about four feet four inches in height. She is very mentally alert, energetic, full of spirit, and constantly on the go, moving from one community volunteer church activity to the next. She perks up as she expresses her thoughts and Mrs. Smith is unwavering in her strong beliefs about public school education in Georgia. Mrs. Smith is an active member of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Albany, Georgia.

She was born in 1923 in Ben Hill County near the town of Fitzgerald, Georgia, which is located about 55 miles East and slightly North of Albany, Georgia, but grew up in Arlington, Georgia. She now lives in a beautiful middle class neighborhood just South of the Albany city limit. Her home is a museum of at least a hundred trophies, plaques, and certificates that she and her late husband accumulated during their teaching careers. During the era before school integration in Dougherty County (1964), her husband was one of the premier basketball coaches among Black high schools in Georgia. They had two children, a daughter and a son. Mrs. Smith was an outstanding educator and she is very

proud of 39-1/9 years of teaching. The 1/9-year was the year her son was born. She retired from the Dougherty County School system in Albany in 1982.

I was born in Ben Hill County in 1923 and I was the only child my parents ever had. My full name is Mattie Hall Smith. When I was quite young my mother and my father lived in Ben Hill County with my father's brothers. His brother went into the military and my father decided to go back to Calhoun County where the rest of the family lived because they were a pretty close family. Of course, Calhoun County is where my father's other sisters and brothers were living. My grandfather died earlier. Well, I never met him but they say he lived to be eighty years old, however, he knew none of his family. Slavery got all of them; he never got to know any of his family from the Hall side, which was my mother's side of the family.

But now on my father's side, he knew his aunts, his mother's sisters. "Because one of them lived…I tell you she was buried the same day Jack Ruby shot Lee Harvey Oswald. We were sitting down waiting to go to the funeral when they announced on TV that Jack Ruby had shot Lee Harvey Oswald. She was one hundred and three years old. That was my father's mother's sister. On his father's side we never knew any paternal folks…they were sold off in slavery before we got to know them. But my grandfather on my mother's side was from a very large family that lived in Terrell County. We went up there one time to do some research and found out that Terrell County used to be a part of Lee County and they said the court house had burned, but anyway, we found some records that

showed my grandfather and his brother married on the same day. In fact, they had double weddings, so I knew that much on his side of the family."

My grandmother's (Mattie Wade) family was also from Terrell County. "We found some helpful information about them. My father's name was James Hill and my grandmother was Mattie Wade Hill. My mother was Ethel Hill Hall. My grandfather left Terrell County and went to Ben Hill County, and bought a track of land. He worked on it over the years. My mother says it was new ground …they cleared it." The farm is still in Ben Hill County but they divided it up some years ago between 10 of the children, ah…most of them are dead now but my mother had her part of the land deeded to me. Even back then my mother had the lawyer to settle it legally. One of the brothers was buried near the property last year.

"I always had a certain amount of pride knowing that my grandfather cleared and maintained ground that had never been cultivated. He died in 1944 and the family has kept the land between an aunt and an uncle. They kept the taxes and all of that paid, it's not cultivated now, but my daughter told me the other week she is going to Fitzgerald and kind of look after the farmland."

I grew up as Mattie Hall in Arlington, Georgia. However, I first attended school at a rural school in Calhoun County, because at first we lived on a rural farm. When I was [thinking to remember] about eight, I know I was on the farm. I remember the great depression because when I was thirteen I remember my father was ill and couldn't farm anymore. That was during the Roosevelt era. So, he went

to Arlington and he worked at the Peanut Mill in Arlington for a number of years. My uncle who had a big farm decided to buy a funeral home, however, he later decided he really didn't want to deal with the funeral home. So, they told my daddy that he should be the one running the funeral home since he worked there more than my uncle. "In an apprentice kind of way, the funeral director from Albany taught the trade to my daddy. So you see, my daddy was eventually an undertaker and I was an only child."

When I went to school in Arlington during the 1930s, the Black school was called Arlington Vocation Training School. Well, they didn't have the high school then. It [the school] was really in…[pausing] I guess it had been a church, or house, or something. There was a man in charge and he was a preacher. I guess he was the principal and the teacher. "This was a one-room building for all of us in Calhoun County. It was a one-room deal and I can remember when Blacks moved into the new vocational school ah…somebody ahead of me graduated from the new school. The girl that graduated from the new vocational school went to Fort Valley State College and while attending there she came back to my high school and enlightened all of us to go to college too when we finished high school." Mr. Young from Savannah State College came there and he was an Ag [agriculture] man and the principal. At that time Baker County didn't have a high school, so students had to come from Baker County to Arlington to attend high school. Arlington is situated partially in both Early County and Calhoun County, but mostly in Calhoun County. I taught there nine years and I vividly recall one time

when I was teaching there that they voted to go over [move the school] into Early County, but Calhoun had such little tax revenue they [city and county officials] talked them into staying in Calhoun County.

During the early years when I was in public school we walked to school. White folks had busses but we didn't have any busses. "Now I can tell you this, and this is interesting to me. The first bus that they got for Black children [paused to think], I don't remember what year, but when they [White school officials] first decided in Calhoun County and in Early County that Blacks could ride the bus, they [Blacks] had to find a Black person who could afford to buy the bus. So my uncle, Cube Hall, bought the first bus for Black children in Calhoun County. Uncle Cube Hall was my daddy's brother, and he bought a bus with money out of his own pocket. Also, I knew another Black man, Mr. Hutchinson, over in Early County, and he bought the first one over there. They had to find a Negro who could afford to buy a bus. Mr. Hutchinson and uncle Cube Hall had to buy their busses, and luckily they could afford to do so. Now, have you ever heard before that that's how those counties got school busses for Black children? Well, that's how Blacks got busses in Calhoun County and the same was true in Early County too."

Now, White folks already had busses. They used to ride by us and taunt us and call us ugly names. I don't know how they got theirs but they were riding busses. I just know these… [Pausing and then changing in mid sentence] the yellow busses were made by the Blue Bird Company at Fort Valley, Georgia. I can

recall how everybody wanted to know, "Where did Cube Hall get that bus from?" and he would tell them. He was an old man; he was in his sixties driving that bus. It was his, so they let him drive it [she laughs as she speaks]. The children used to yak about him driving so slowly. He would just stop and ask them if they wanted to get out and walk on [laughed hardily], because that was his bus.

"White folks already had busses and their children were being bussed to school. They'd pass us, spitting on us and throwing things at us out the windows of the bus because we had to walk." It was awful for them to ride by us and spit at us.

During my public school years ah…we didn't have 12th grade. We finished after the 11th grade. But the year I was supposed to finish we didn't get through the 11th grade, that was in 1939, and we didn't get the term out. I think it was about two weeks before school was supposed to be out during my 10th grade term when we were first notified that funds were low. We had seven months left to complete the 11th grade when they notified them that the money for schools had run out. "Have you ever run in to anything like that? Rosa Cross [another Black teacher] had the promissory note from where she taught in some county in South Georgia where they never did pay her. The money ran out in Calhoun County and they notified the teachers. I remember it very well because I had a little speech to make at graduation. I recall how I had to struggle to try to get it learned so I could make it sooner because they were notified to close the schools early because there was no more money to pay teachers, this happened in 1939."

But when I left those country schools I went to Arlington, I think it must have been…[thinking hard] I think I was in sixth grade. According to the way they did it in the rural areas back then we had to buy our books. I remember it because E. D. Rivers was campaigning for office. He was running for governor of Georgia and he said if he were elected we would get free schoolbooks. "He was elected and boy, were we happy!"

Prior to that, my momma knew a White lady in Arlington whose son was a grade ahead of me, and momma used to pay her for his used books so I would have books to use in school. There were Black children from large families who didn't have any books at all, because I'd have to share mine. My daddy would buy me a penny pencil and he would put a string around it and put it around my neck, and "I'd better have that penny pencil when I got home from school. We had rough paper to write on. No wonder I didn't learn to write well [laughingly spoken]."

Now, let me tell you, my mother and father pushed education. Even when we were on the farm, my Uncle Cube Hall and my daddy would work together on each other's farm. When he and daddy were sharecropping Uncle Cube had vowed since he was a boy that he was going to have something in life. So he saved and bought a little land a bit at a time until he had a nice farm. He wanted to work so that he could earn money to educate his children. Going to school was a "must" in my daddy's house. Nothing was important enough for me to stay away from school. Not one thing, oh no!

We had a chorus at our school too, they taught us to sing, and we had plays, dramatizations, for instance, "Lift Every Voice and Sing." Folks were passing it out and I laughed, because you see, "I grew up in that school singing 'Lift Every Voice and Sing,' they called it the Negro National Anthem. At one point in time in our history they [some Whites and some Blacks] didn't want you to call it the Negro national anthem, they wanted you to call it 'Lift Every Voice and Sing.' Then they got back to calling it the 'Negro National Anthem' again, but we knew all about that. Mary McCloud Bethune and all kind of Black history was Mr. Young's thing to tell us. Carter G. Wooden and stuff like that…so I thought I was lucky."

Everybody was not in the area to teach what he or she was taught to teach [some teachers were teaching out of field], but they did it as best they could. I think we were lucky to have them. They all had college education as far as I know. Mr. and Mrs. Young were graduates of Savannah State College. Now, there were some teachers in there that didn't have degrees. I found out later that one of the teachers from Cuthbert, Georgia was in music but he didn't have a degree. Yet, he knew music and he could really play the piano.

Now, back during that time teachers could teach without completing their college degree. I didn't finish college right away, I went to Fort Valley State College ah…when I went there in 1939, both Fort Valley and Albany State were supposed to be four-year colleges. Dr. J. W. Holley [President of Albany State College] did something…I don't remember exactly what it was but they formed

some kind of alliance, and it had to do with ole Gene Talmadge. Somehow they put Albany State back to a two-years college. However, Fort Valley State continued to be a four-years college and I wanted to stay there and complete four years. I went there [Fort Valley State College] to major in home economics but after I got there and stayed two years my father told me I had to go to work. So, I taught with two years of college and since they were now a four-year college, they didn't give us enough professional education in the two-year period. We needed 18 quarter-credit hours to get a two-year professional certificate.

In order to encourage us to stay four years they deliberately let us have 15 credit hours. But a lot of us didn't stay any longer than two years. I didn't stay four years and that meant I got what was called a provisional certificate. So, the difference between my salary and a young lady that I worked with teaching school with the professional certificate was I got $45 a month, and she got $47.50. She had a professional certificate from Albany State College because they were not involved in this political situation. I don't remember the details regarding it but I know it had something to do with the kind of teaching certificate we got. This would be good for somebody to research and find out about all of that political activity that was going on with the Black colleges then.

Anyway, I worked for $45.00 a month and I had to save enough from that to go to summer school. "I was determined to finish, so I would stay in contact with my roommate from Dublin, Georgia, who was able to stay in school each quarter. I would write her each quarter to find out what she was taking and I made

a note of it so when I got back in the summer, I knew exactly what I would take. I meant to get those four years. Oh, Lord I wanted to get those four years." At Fort Valley State College the room and board was $14.00 a month, I worked, and I made $4.00 a month and my folks would send me the rest of it. During my second year at Fort Valley State I ironed shirts in the college laundry to earn the money I needed to pay for my schooling [most students worked at different jobs on campus]. For example, if we had $10.00 we had to iron so many hours to make up what was equivalent to that $4.00 balance needed for room and board for the month. This was at Fort Valley State College in 1940.

Fort Valley and the school that was in Forsyth, Georgia [She cannot recall the name of the college in Forsyth] had merged and that's when Fort Valley State became a four-year college. I went back to college each summer until I finished and I graduated from Fort Valley State College in 1947. The president was Julian Bond's father, Horace Mann Bond. He was the first president of Fort Valley State College and he was president during the time I was there. You know those Bond's were "something" [someone very special] to the Black educators, like the Eaglesons and some others. The Eaglesons had roots in Louisiana. These were important families in Black education.

My first teaching job was a two-teacher school at Williamsburg, which is about eight miles from Arlington and actually located in Calhoun County between Albany and Arlington. I started teaching there in 1941. I taught there two years and I also taught in Early County in a little town call Damascus, Georgia for one

year. I taught in Blakely a year, and then I got a job in Arlington. I taught in Arlington nine years and the rest of my years were spent teaching in Dougherty County. I recall at one point when I was in Arlington the number of children there out grew the building and we placed old Army barracks from World War II up on a little hill, and used them as classrooms. I also recall, I used to have to raise money for the prom when I was in charge of the 11th grade.

So, I came to Dougherty County in 1956. I was at Carver Junior High School for about four years then I went to old Monroe High and stayed there until 1963. Then I moved to South Side Middle School where I taught 19 years. I remember that well. I taught in the Dougherty County System 26 years. All total I taught 39 and 1/9-years. The 1/9-year was the year my son was born.

When you had maternity business back then it meant you lost your job and you got another one only if somebody would hire you to fill a vacancy somewhere. I retired in 1982. I was going to retire the previous year but I remember that our salary was raised to $18,000.00 that year, so I decided to work one more year and retire in 1982. This is my 20th year of retirement, 1982 to 2002, and the Lord has let me stay here [she really looks, speaks, and thinks well to have worked over 39 years and to have been retired 20 years. She is in excellent mental and physical condition].

I taught in the old segregated system and in the integrated schools too. They integrated the schools where I taught in the early seventies. I remember one time my husband told me a truck passed by from one of the White schools across town

and it was loaded with better schoolbooks than our son had so he got them and brought them home. He said to us [speaking to Mrs. Smith and some other teachers], "they were taking these books to discard or burn them or something, and I got them." They were very good mathematics books and other good books, better than the ones we used at our school, and the man driving the truck gave my husband those good books.

Now, that shows you about that. You can see the difference between how things were provided for them over and against us. They came in and really started changing things in the early seventies, if I am correct. They began grouping students over at Carver Junior high and at other schools as well; we started what they called a homogenous grouping. The smarter students were grouped in what we called the top-level classes and it was started based on testing, and test scores, which helped to formulate changes. A friend of mine thought it was a good idea and she helped to encourage these changes. I think she had studied somewhere where these ideas were advocated.

I think the segregated Black schools were very good schools. I think students were promoted, prompted, inspired, and pushed. Teachers tried anything to encourage students more. Black teachers had to uplift the moral, the social and the economic conditions of our communities. They knew that they had to teach us in such a way that we could go out and improve conditions in our communities. My teachers taught me that way and…I taught my students the same way. Another thing I can recall is, now maybe someone does, but I do not remember being

bothered about drugs when we were in those all Black schools. I don't remember anything or any concerns about drugs until after integration [laughs]. We were never bothered with any drugs around any school. But before I left, I remember they were talking about how the drug dogs would come and sniff on certain days, and all kinds of stuff. We picked up in some instances some of the worst things that they [Whites] did. Now, I don't know what they got from us but we got some of their worst things. I don't know why but I guess that's a simulation from having been together.

We used to go to the superintendent's office and go into that book room where they stored books, and we didn't care how old something was, we'd get it and carry it back to our children. All we had to do was get our hands on all those used books that those White people had and we would give them to our students who didn't have any books. We would read those books; we were glad to get hand-me-down. We would get the ragged stuff they didn't want...like the books my husband pulled off the truck from one of those White schools that they were going to burn. We gladly took them. Now, the bad part of the Black schools segregated schools was we didn't have books and supplies. Things were separate and very unequal.

Back in the old days in the segregated schools, Black teachers took on a parenting role. But we had stopped whipping before integration. The strap was out because our principal told us all about not doing that anymore [whipping students]. I don't know how whipping stopped before integration but I remember

it was cut out. But if it hadn't been cutout it was going to be completely cutout after integration because we knew we were not going to spank across racial lines. I know some other things that changed too. We had to make home visits. If you didn't come to school we had to go and find out why, be able to explain why, and then pass it on to the visiting teacher. "I remember one time we were before the Judge down town about some kids who had stayed out of school, we were all there; teachers, principal, and parents. However, the children were not there and in some cases didn't attend school any better afterwards. But once they [White teachers] got there we didn't make home visits anymore because that wasn't going to work. White folk were not going to allow us into their homes. We used to have PTA meetings [Parent Teacher Association meetings] at night and we stopped having them after integration because White teachers weren't going to come into all of those different Black neighborhoods to those Black schools at night." There were a lot of things that we [Black teachers] were forced to do before integration changed things. After school integration we didn't have to give up our job anymore for maternity purposes. After school integration we had a period of time [maternity leave time] we could be out and not loose our job. Before, we would loose our jobs but when we integrated I remember that stopped.

I was at South Side Middle School when they integrated. They [White teachers] didn't want to be there I don't guess, because as soon as they earned their stripes so to speak, or after a period of time they would try to get to one of those schools that had mostly White teachers and a White principal. Look like

around three years, they were gone; they struggled to get to one of those other [White] schools. The same thing was true at Monroe High School [the Black high school in Albany], as soon as they could leave there and get to a predominately White schools, they went.

Now the pay, "we always heard that…well we didn't know what they [White teachers] got but we understood that they got more pay than we did. Some years back, and I don't remember what year, someone doing some research or something went to the State Department and had records pulled and found that differences in pay for Black and White teachers existed. It went through the courts and the state decided to equalize pay based on professional or provisional certificates. I don't remember what year that was, but yes, at some point they were paid more than we were. We always wondered later…we knew that the state paid us on the basis of our certification but we didn't know what local schools boards did. We don't know what went on at the local level." We figured out the state paid us the same based on years of experience and our certification but the differences were at the local county level. Teachers used to have to go back to school for re-certification after…[pausing briefly and thinking] I think it was five years, and then the state started giving a life certificate to teachers in Georgia. I don't know what they give now. In fact, I didn't have to go back to summer school after I got my Master's degree from Atlanta University in 1952.

Here's how I felt about integrating the schools. "Well, we always felt that we were missing out on something and that 'separate-but-equal' was not fair. I still

think it's not fair. I still think we all should be there [in the best schools available]. I mean, how are you going to divide it? I used to get angry with one of my aunts who would bake candy and give one child more than she would give the other. So 'separate-but-equal,' I didn't like that idea, and I still don't.

I'm not satisfied with what is going on in Dougherty County with this neighborhood thing, because it's not limited to your neighborhood. The children out here are not going to schools in their neighborhood. These schools are just as much transported as any other. That's why it's so many busses on this street now. I don't see why the neighborhood concept exists, that's just another way to segregate the children. Our neighborhoods are very segregated. I know these schools in Albany are pretty much still segregated; they are! But I blame the city commissioners up there shouting and talking about, 'put the schools back in their neighborhoods.' The neighborhoods are all segregated. Segregated neighborhoods foster segregated schools; I don't care what you say. You see, this 'separate-but-equal' business doesn't work. And you see, by being among people [being in racially integrated schools] they can't pull the wool over your eyes as much. Now, I want our Black things and I don't have anything against them [Whites] but I don't want them to have the best of everything over there to themselves. I do not. If we get with them and work at it we can improve. Just keep working at it. Yes, I'm for it, I'm for mixing…now, that's my version of it."

I think integrating the schools helped Black children. Here is what I used to say, "For something we were bitterly unhappy about, we weren't getting what

we were due. So, by putting us together, whatever good things they get, we could also get and benefit from them. We were missing out on so much in terms supplies and other educational resources. We were not being told what was going on in terms of the things we could get. In deed, I think integration is better. In spite of the problems it caused or whatever, we were able to get more. We have to be diligent in keeping up with what's going on, what's available, what's happening in the classroom, and parents have a job [responsibility] to keep up with it, and to see that their children are not pushed over or placed where they should not be. I don't know why they group children as they do. You know, there seem to be a feeling that too many of our children are in those special services classes and lower level classes."

I know African American students can learn as well as White students. We have parents at home that are just not pushing them. You can tell in your classroom, which homes have parents that are pushing their children. Like I told you about my daddy, he wouldn't let me just drag along. Some parents don't know what their children are doing all year long because they were not talking to the teachers; they are not checking on their children's grades, this is a parent problem. A lot that is happening to our children is an "at home problem." We at home must be vigilant [speaking forcefully] about what's going on in the classroom! My principal, who was a Black man, worked hard to see that Black and White teachers did their jobs well.

I never had any real racial problems as a teacher. I never had any racial hang-ups but we all have some hang-ups. I have always tried to be fair to everyone. A child is a child with me. We were all supposed to be there for the children.

I tell you now, when they put in this gifted program, I remember this gifted lady [a teacher that taught advanced or high achievers] had more of them [White student] in there than Blacks. Now, maybe more of the White students were gifted. "But, you see, we taught Black children and there were instances where we knew their test scores were very high too. I remember some Black teachers raising sand [arguably challenging how students were selected for the gifted program] about some of the Black students who were good students, in fact, honor students and did not get in the thing [the gifted program]. Some teachers would go to bat and straighten out things like that. Some things you can straighten out on your level and some you can't. There was a little discrimination along those lines. One little Black boy was smart as a whip but he was fidgeted, so they put him out. They said if he couldn't behave himself, he couldn't stay in the gifted program."

Schools are just like the larger society in which we live. Let me go back to when they first started integration, "it was supposed to be a 60 to 40 ratio of Whites to Blacks for faculty and students. But as schools changed to being Black, Black, and Blacker with more Black students than Whites, I remember telling my coworker that they are not changing the faculty hiring to reflect the changing ratio of students. They are hiring more of them [White teachers] than they are of us.

You see, as it progressed with more and more Black students coming into the schools they didn't follow through with the hiring of more Black teachers, nobody seemed to push that. Now, some schools hardly have any Black teachers, its just tokenism. But that's true just like in society too." The year they desegregated, the assistant superintendent [A Black man] called me and said, "Mrs. Mattie, let me tell you, we're going to get some of those children [White students] this year, this is the year of desegregation". He said, "Now you are going to have some of them [White students] with an IQ of 138 and up," and I did. "But in that class we had some Blacks that were hanging right in there with them, they were smart, and I mean smart, those Black children were smart too. They were just as smart as the assistant superintendent said the Whites were. So we can learn too…we're just as smart…if we have people to push us and see that we do our homework."

I don't think White teachers pushed Black children to really learn. I don't know why they didn't. I think in some of the integrated cases Black students just learned incidentally. Our parents were pushing us to learn. Some students may get it because they are in a setting where others are learning, but if they have somebody at home to push them, then they will make it. But then going where they go [White schools] is another advantage, I don't know about the public school but going to the White colleges and universities you get a better chance at jobs when you finish. On the other hand, if you go to one of those Black schools, I don't know what will happen. It is usually more difficult to find employment when we graduate from Black universities as opposed to graduating from White

universities. So, some things happen by virtue of where you are and I still say we ought to be there in those other schools, if we can.

I didn't see that White teachers improved education for Black students and to say that they did is just a myth in my opinion. I felt like more learning took place in segregated Black schools because we pushed our children more. We could see our children with ability and we would say to them, "Now you do this or you do that." We'd say, "You know you have too much ability to make this low grade." That kind of pushing was lost after integration. Where I was, I didn't see them [White teachers] pushing like that. Our teachers used to buy materials for us so we could sew and be involved in other learning activities in our schools but I didn't see those White teachers buying any materials when they came.

White teachers were not better teachers than Black teachers. I tell you this; they do more seatwork, more busy stuff…than we do, and more paper stuff. When I first started teaching, I taught arithmetic in first grade. I would go to the blackboard and demonstrate the work from the assignment and then I would have the students go to the board and do it. They [White teachers] like to assign students lot of stuff to sit and do at their seats, but students need explanations about things that might be misunderstood. It's a difference in teaching techniques.

We like to do more of the explanation kind of instructions and they like to involve students in seatwork activities…they would pass out plenty paper work. "Black students need explanations because when some of them went home they didn't have anybody at home to explain things. A lot of it has to do with at home

life…family! But for our children in masses, Black teachers were really an advantage for them. We could encourage them to get their lesson and we did all kinds of things to get them to get it. I never saw any White teachers spending time like that and encouraging our students to get their lesson. They took the attitude, "Get it if you get it, if you don't, you don't."

If you speak up about issues with them they don't like it and you may make yourself unpopular. Not only did we encourage the children, but also we encouraged each other as teachers. A friend [Black] of mine had a very smart child attending one of the White schools and there was someone from the old days who couldn't understand the fact that Black children in integrated schools were often ignored when they would raise their hands to recite. There are a lot of racial things that have gone on and when you talk to people in other counties you will just be surprised at how bad things were. You'll be surprised. But the dedication Black teachers had for our children was…ah I just declare, it was special. Our children used to never have problems with mathematics. They were good in mathematics and often attended mathematics tournaments. During latter years, we started having so many problems in the area of mathematics. It wasn't always that way. We had good mathematics students and we had good mathematics teachers.

Over the years, Black teachers have been very dedicated professionals. Don't you know how we used to love our teaching and our children too? We loved the whole deal, we did! Being a teacher was something else [a special honor] many years ago. What other profession was there for us? But in recent years it

seems we are at the bottom of the professional scale as teachers. Well you see, nobody teaches respect anymore so you don't get respect at school and the children tell you off too [children are verbally disrespectful of teachers]. Children used to not disrespect teachers so badly. They are a product of their society and they aren't respecting anybody at home either. Many parents in those latter year used to say to me, "You make him do because I can't get him to do anything." My daddy would have been buried alive if I had not done what he said. He would get [chastise] me even if I simply forgot something and we all know, children do forget.

We were dedicated teachers and we loved our jobs. Back then we didn't have a lot of choices either. When I came up, I only knew nursing and teaching and momma said that I said, "I always wanted to teach." Fellows had to be preachers. Now, in my day they used to say that the only thing educated Blacks could do was teach or preach. But that's all we were allowed to do and one had to be a fellow to preach. Now, there are all kinds of professional choices for Blacks.

I really enjoyed teaching. When you see students you taught doing well you feel good. Students went out from the old segregated Black schools armed with what they had been taught. They make a dreamer out of you. You dream about what they are going to be in society. My daddy used to say, "You've got to earn a living and what you get in your head nobody can take it from you." That's your education.

"But I tell you, we should be able to share what the White students have because it's all ours. Why should we be segregated and give them the pleasure of getting private education at the public's expense? If they weren't running from us we wouldn't have such a segregation school problem."

We need to keep producing good Black teachers. Yes, because there is a real shortage of them now. Yes, we need to stay in there. I used to go to the bookshop in the summer and just read books so I could find the ones our slow students needed. I would see what was in them so I could recommend them to my curriculum director [a position created after Jeanes Supervisors were no longer active in schools] and then she could choose them. You can lookout for your folks if you are in and are a part of something. Black teachers don't ever need to be out of the classroom. We need to be in the policy making part too, we need to just be a part of the entire education process. If it takes using my personal time then I'll use it. I was glad to help. As stated earlier, I read many books during the summers to help choose the right books for our students and I enjoyed it very much.

Black teachers were a very valuable part of Black society and all of society in general, and they still should be today. They really nurtured our society. I had a dynamic 39 and 1/9-years as an educator. I can look at those I taught who are now doctors, lawyers, educators, and other things, and feel so proud to have been a teacher. "I feel so proud."

I have seen Mrs. Smith on numerous occasions since I interviewed her for my dissertation research. Mrs. Smith loves gardening and using her computer to

surf the Internet. When she is not out volunteering at one of the local hospitals or performing volunteer services associated with church, Mrs. Smith can be found actively digging, planting, and tending to the flower gardens that surround her home. Her supply of energy seems to never run out. I believe that if she wanted to, she could still effectively teach students and manage a classroom.

Portrait

George Rogers

Allow me to introduce Mr. George Rogers. Mr. Rogers was born in Atlanta, Georgia in 1926. He is about 5-foot 10-inches tall, somewhat thin and speaks in a deep baritone voice that seems to command authority. He is an individual with great persistence. When he sets a goal for himself, he will not let go until it has been obtained. He is a no frills individual who gets right to the point about things without embellishments. Mr. Rogers is a United States Army Veteran and he attributes much of his conduct and actions to lessons learned as a result of his military training.

His parents were not well educated, neither parent completed high school but they were caring parents. His father was a railroad worker and his mother worked in a school cafeteria at one of the Atlanta Public Schools. Their marriage produced two children; Mr. Rogers has one brother. Mr. Rogers never married and admits that he has always enjoys being single. He addresses issues and answers questions without wasted words. Mr. Rogers is a member of Allen Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church in Atlanta, Georgia.

My name is George Rogers. I was born in Atlanta, Georgia and I went to Oglethorpe Elementary School and Booker T. Washington High School here in

Atlanta. Oglethorpe Elementary School was located on the campus of Morris Brown College and at that time it was a private school. Oglethorpe Elementary School was one of the training schools at the college. It was located in one of those three-story buildings on campus. The principal's name was Mrs. Johnson and Washington High was the only Black high school in Atlanta at that time, of course in 1947, David T. Howard was a junior high school and it later became a senior high school.

Well, My mother was not educated; she didn't have a high school education and neither did my father. He worked for the railroad; now back then working for the railroad was a pretty good job. Mom worked in the cafeteria at one of the local Black schools so we were economically stable. Other than that, I had one brother who wouldn't do anything. He went to the Army for a while and came out [pausing, then speaking softly and sorrowfully] and just let himself go. So, out of the whole family of all the cousins and things, I am the only one that attended and finished college.

I had an aunt who used to tell me 'you cannot make it through life if you don't have an education,' and that stuck with me. I went on…I worked hard in high school, of course I maintained a job too, I had a job after school. I maintained that job in order to get some of the things that I wanted. But she was the one who would always say to me "You can't make it through life without and education." So I finished college at Morris Brown and went on to Atlanta University and got a Master's Degree from there.

Naturally, attending public school in Atlanta in the early 40s I attended all Black segregated schools. In high school of course, we didn't even have a White teacher or in fact White students. Well, initially I didn't give much thought to school segregation but I thought about it after I started teaching. One thing that used to happen before they integrated schools is we would always get a lot of used books from White schools. I know the books were used because the names of the schools where the books came from would be written in them and White kids names were written all over the books. These are the books that we used in our high school.

In segregated Black schools where there were only Black students and Black teachers, we had some good teachers who were concerned and we had some teachers who just didn't care. We had some good teachers and we had some sorry teachers. The good teachers were the ones who kept us straight and we could tell that they were good because they showed they cared very much about us. If they found students cutting a class they would make them go to class. Many times they would walk students to class. I don't know whether or not our teachers had to do lesson plans back then but to my knowledge I never saw them put any objectives or anything like that on the board. I also know we had some good Black educators because we've produced many doctors, lawyers, teachers, and other Black professionals from those old segregated schools. So I would say our Black teachers were doing an effective job of teaching. But now the ah…students who went on to medical school or law school and so on…most of them had their minds

made up already. They were just good students anyway. I remember I had one teacher who would bring a pork chop sandwich to school everyday and she never moved from the desk. She would sit there and nibble on that pork chop sandwich all day long and she really didn't teach much of anything.

I went to high school before going to the Army. I was in high school two years before joining the Army. I would have graduated in the class of 1944 but I was in service. So, during the late 40s I was still in high school and in fact, I graduated in 1947, well after my class had gone. When I attended public schools our teachers were looked upon as special people. Black teachers were given a lot of respect in the Black neighborhood, and even the young children growing up showed great respect for teachers. They [the neighborhood children] would look up and see a teacher coming up the street and they would holler "here come Mrs. so and so, and she's going to my house. She's going to talk to my momma." When I attended public schools it was not unusual to find situations where parents chastised their children in front of the teacher. When I was in school, to a certain degree teachers took on the role of parents.

I remember having one teacher who was my homeroom teacher; we used to refer to him as "Chief Gideon." He made home visits and he would always call and check on students if they were absent from school. But other than Chief Gideon, teachers seldom came to our homes. Chief Gideon would always look after students. He called everyone "Chief" when he addressed him or her. Chief Gideon was a stern man but he got along well with all students. When he found

students meandering about the halls he would ask, "Chief where do you belong?" Often he would walk students to class. I had another teacher who would run students off the hall, his name was Mr. Hank Archer, and he would put the board [paddle] to students too. These were good male teachers; about half of the faculty was male. So, I finished Booker T. Washington High, the oldest Black high school in the state of Georgia. I dare say, Booker T. Washington High was a very good school but we didn't have all the facilities we needed there, in fact, when we had assembly programs we had to go over to the USO [United States Officers Club], which was located a short distance from the school, because we didn't have an auditorium at Washington High School.

I'll give you a good example of how students appreciate teachers. I was on the expressway one day and a state trooper passed me, he recognized me and threw up his hand. I noticed he slowed up, so I pulled up beside him, threw up my hand and kept driving. He pulled over behind me and turned his blue lights on, and when we stopped he said to me, "Mr. Rogers, I just wanted to speak to you, I haven't seen you since I graduated." All he wanted to do was speak to me and no doubt that says that I as a teacher had some positive influence on that person's life.

Another example of how students appreciate teachers is a situation wherein a young man who is one of my former students served on the police force in Atlanta. Ah…I had a wreck, he passed by saw me; he turned around and came back and the first thing he said to me was, "I recognized you and I didn't want anything to happen to you." Encounters such as these have special meaning to me

because these were my students and they show the kind of influence that Black teachers had on Black students.

I had one question I used to ask them [the students] quite often, "What are your plans for your future?" Some would answer, "I don't know," however, some had their minds made up. Like the state trooper guy, a state trooper had impressed him and he said to me, "I want to be a state trooper."

When I graduated from Morris Brown College in 1959, I started teaching in the Atlanta Public School System. I needed a job and I was ready to work so I accepted a position at an elementary school teaching special education. I taught in the Atlanta Public School System in the early sixties when all schools there were segregated. When they integrated schools in Atlanta, I was moved to a White school. I was one of the first teachers that went from a Black school to one of the White schools to help integrate the Atlanta School System. I was moved to Morning Side Elementary School, which is in a predominately White area out near the Governor's Mansion. I wasn't the only Black teacher moved to Morning Side Elementary; there were other Black teachers who moved as well. They also imported Black students to Morning Side. They started using school busses to achieve school integration throughout the city of Atlanta. Many Black children were forced to ride busses to their assigned schools and if the school bus did not go into their neighborhood to make pickups, then they rode public transportation. Children were issued school tokens to ride public transportation so parents did not

have to pay. School children were issued ten bus tokens per week and they used two tokens per day: one to go to school and one to return from school.

Before integration I taught all Black students and some of them came from housing projects in Atlanta, and many of them had never used public transportation before. It was my job-duty to take them, put them on public transportation and teach them how to ride the bus. We taught those kids many different things. We had to go so far as to teach them how to use the telephone. So as a Black teacher I had to teach students more than what was in our textbooks. I had to teach many things that Black children needed in order to survive and have good survival skills within our culture.

Segregated Black schools provided an excellent education for those kids who wanted to learn and I dare say, many of them were eager to learn. I don't know whether it was a front [pretending or giving false appearance] or what, but the faculty received me pretty nicely when I arrived at the White school to help with integration. As soon as I arrived, I started working with handicapped children. I shall never forget an experience in which a little White girl approached me and said, "I don't want you for no teacher, I want one of them other teachers." In other words what she was saying to me was, I don't want a Black teacher, I want a White teacher. After getting her birth certificate and her record I found that her mother and father were actually sister and brother, and she had emotional problems. Also, she had muscular dystrophy and struggled when she walked…[he

demonstrates how terribly she struggled to walk]. So I understood she had a number of problems she was attempting to cope with.

In some cases, I think integration improved education for Blacks but on the other hand there were some losses. I say this because after integration many Black students were in situations where White teachers didn't give them much attention. Many times they [White teachers] taught toward the White students and basically ignored the Blacks. I taught all of them and I gave all of them equal attention because my job was to prepare those handicapped children for job situations and how to get around in the city [they were physically challenged]. Once I planned a field trip for them to go to Riches [A huge retail store in Atlanta], I made contact at Riches and they had everything set up for our arrival. When we walked in, the little Black kids were in front of me and the sales person began to interrogate them, asking questions such as, "What do you all want here? And, "Why are so many of you in this store?" So, I said to her, "I'm the teacher you talk to me." So that took care of that problem. I took care of those children.

Integration helped because some Black children were able to go to private White schools. For example, we have a private school in Atlanta called West Minister and kids who went to West Minister made good of themselves. I know situations where students that attended West Minister graduated a couple of years before students that started at the same time they did, but were attending Black schools. At first all private schools were segregated but eventually Black and White students were attending together. Black children that attended West

Minister or other private White schools were the children of parents that were educators or doctors and some may have been the children of well-off ministers.

In one sense Blacks really felt that they were getting a better deal by sending their children to integrated schools. They felt teachers at integrated schools had to be more sincere than teachers in segregated schools, but it was a matter of adjustment for everyone. I think in most schools most Black teachers and White teachers got along well together.

White teachers that were really prepared helped improve education for Black students. However, White teachers were not in general better teachers than Black teachers. We have as many good Black teachers as we do good White teachers.

I didn't teach White children in anyway differently from the way I taught Black children. When I would teach regular students who were not in a special needs class, I would walk around in the classroom and encourage all students to take note. When I was in my special needs classes I would sit down with students and go over what had been taught that day, and ask them if they understood or what could I do to help?

At first, I was a little nervous about integration. But the way the desegregation process worked in Atlanta was based on a lottery system. They assigned teachers to schools based on their social security number. If your social security number ended in a certain number and matched a number drawn from the lottery you would be moved to help with the integration process. For example, my

social security number ending [The last 4 or 6 numbers of one's social security account number] was drawn early so I was among the first Black teachers selected to move from a Black school to a White school. After the lottery we were allowed to finish the school year where we were and then move to our new school the following year in order to achieve integration. They also allowed teachers to tour the school where they would be reassigned prior to the time they were scheduled to actually relocate. This happened for both Black and White teachers.

Also, at first I was against integration because it meant I had to move to a different school and travel a farther distance everyday. In fact, after integration I was assigned to a different school and everyday I had to drive from South Atlanta to Georgia Tech's Campus, and then walk some distance to get to Okeef Middle School, which was located on the campus at Georgia Tech.

Black teachers that I knew, felt good about themselves and they felt that they were professional people who where working in a good profession. I definitely did. I was a member of several professional organizations. I was a member of the National Education Association (NEA) and I was a member of another professional organization for special needs teachers. We considered teaching as a profession, and let me say this, "the special needs teachers ah…salary was a little different and it was easy for them to get money to go on to graduate school. That's because the government placed a lot of emphases on this area and there was a real need for those qualified to teach special needs children."

I occasionally detected a type of class system in Black schools and in the Black community as far as economics was concerned. We had children who thought they were better than others because they came from a certain neighborhood or because of their economic status, or the kind of work their parents did. I experienced this type of attitude as a young adult in high school at Booker T. Washington High. There was a Young lady in my class that lived in a neighborhood near Hunter Street and she thought that she was better than we were, so she did not associate with those of us from other lower socio-economic neighborhoods. But I had known her for many years; I knew her from Oglethorpe Elementary School.

I believe Black administrators had more meetings than White administrators did. Under my Black administrator [principal], every Tuesday there was a faculty meeting. That was just Black folks' style. When I was in a segregated school and had to move to one that was integrated I could tell the difference. Under a Black administrator, regardless of what our job was we had to go to faculty meetings. Now when I was in an integrated situation the principal would always come by to say, "Well, Mr. Rogers you can go on home you don't have to worry about this because it doesn't pertain to you." I feel Black administrators in general were just tighter in terms of the controls over faculty. It was probably due to fear and intimidation, since most of them were afraid of loosing their jobs. Most of them were afraid of their jobs and they were afraid someone in the community would report them to the superintendent's office.

Integration was nice though because we didn't have all those faculty meetings. See, most Black principals were hung-up on faculty meetings. Black principals will call a faculty meeting this Tuesday and come back next Tuesday, and then call another faculty meeting to tell you the same thing they told you on the previous Tuesday. That was not the case at the integrated schools where I worked and where the principal was White.

I taught a total of 36 years [including two years military time] in the Atlanta School System. I retired in 1993. I saw schools go from segregated to what we call integrated. I saw a White superintendent we used to refer to as, "Momma Jira" [Mrs. Ira Jarrell was a former superintendent of the Atlanta Public School System] removed from the school system and replaced with the first Black elected school superintendent, Dr. Alonzo Crim. "He was a pretty good superintendent. [jokingly speaking then laughing loudly] He was good as long as he didn't have to come and mess with me." Occasionally, I would see him come in the building and I would see him in the halls. I really enjoyed my teaching career but after 36 years I knew it was time for me to move out of the way.

I did not get much else out of Mr. Rogers. He does not at all appear to be loquacious. Yet, I recall spending the better part of a day with him and he seemed to be enjoying retired life to the fullest. As we departed from each other, he headed across town to visit and enjoy the company of friends. His final words to me were that he was really enjoying life.

Portrait

Ruth L. Lumpkin

Allow me to introduce you to Mrs. Ruth Louise Lumpkin. Parental guidance and the help of an aunt provided the inspiration that steered Mrs. Lumpkin towards becoming a teacher. She is very energetic and stays active within her church and community. Mrs. Lumpkin is very positive and passionate in her belief that Black teachers have always believed that they were professionals.

I am the daughter of Thomas James McCrary, Sr. and Viola Marshall McCrary. I am the second of five children. My mother was a teacher and a cook. My father was employed at Swift and Company in Moultrie, Georgia, and he served in the Navy during World War II. So ah…my father worked with Swift and Company and that was my first encounter with the labor union known as the AFL-CIO [American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations]. That was our first encounter with strikes and many people who worked there lived from paycheck to paycheck. Sometimes, they didn't have anything to eat. My father worked in the canteen at Swift and Company and he could always get those meats that had a little spot on them. My mother was known as "the cook" until she died. She would cook big [really emphasizing big] meals so everybody would be full and she often shared those meals with others outside of our household.

Now, they always thought I was special. But my father had to go to war, when he was 35 years old. He had five children and he really was not supposed to go, but after Pearl Harbor many things happened. They sent him to the Navy; he was very light [light complexion]. They sent darker skin men to the Navy too, but mostly lighter complexion men were sent to the Navy. He would say when he returned, "if only I had had that piece of paper [high school diploma], I knew more than they knew." My father was an avid reader; he read the newspaper from cover to cover. I only read it from section to section…reading only what I like.

So he kept saying that to us…how valuable that piece of paper was [high school diploma]. There were five of us and we are all college graduates. My oldest brother has the Ph. D., he's a research chemist and my baby brother is a consulting engineer, and all my sisters are teachers.

I was inspired to teach because my mother was a teacher and so was my aunt. I know now that my aunt Cecilia was a linguist, but I had not heard of the word back then…I'm very talkative today because I always wanted to talk, aunt Cecilia said, "You must use correct English." I was surrounded by teachers and I really didn't have much of a choice in the matter, in a sense. I admired my first grade teacher, Mrs. Baker. When I was a little girl I was always performing as Mrs. Baker in the afternoon, after school was out, and my mother and my aunt said, "She's going to be a teacher." So education was very important in my household.

education but in a sense he was very educated. He was a believer in saying, "You must get a good education," and this he instilled in my father, but my father only finished the tenth grade. My father never said to me that the ninth grade was the grade in which they graduated at that time but to me it had to have been. Back then most teachers started teaching after they completed seventh grade. After completing the seventh grade you could teach.

In Colquitt County, back in the 30s, we had what was known as the primer, high first, and low first grades. Completing the primmer, low first, and high first meant that a person could spend twelve years in public school. Now, all children didn't stay in low first because I stayed only two weeks, but some children really went through 12 grades.

When I was a young girl in the primary grades in elementary school and in high school my educational experiences were very enriching. Moultrie, Georgia, is a unique town. I don't know why, it might have been because of the military base there, but whatever they put on the White side of town…they would also put it on the Black side of town. We always said it was to keep us from bothering them. It was probably done to maintain segregation in good order. I shall never forget, in Moultrie we always played basketball and football in the same facility and field as the Whites did. Ah…we played football in the same stadium that they use today. We used to play basketball in the same gymnasium that the Whites played in. They scheduled all of the games for Blacks in the White facilities, but we had a plan that would cause them to try to find us a gymnasium and stadium of our own.

"On the way back from our games late at night, we would intentionally make loud noises to wake up White folks as we passed by their houses. You see those things [annoying White folk late at night] just can't keep on happening without someone doing something about it. We thought this action would lead to getting our own sports facilities. [Eventually, during the 1950s and afterward, gymnasiums were a part of the construction of new segregated schools built for Black students].

But my experiences in school were great and I believe it is because I went to Moultrie High School for Negro Youth. But the newspaperman does not want to write that; they want to say that I finished from Bryant. I say, "You want to know the truth? I don't even know who Bryant is…I do now, I don't know why they named the school after Bryant." I finished high school in 1949, at Moultrie High School for Negro Youth. I attended very segregated schools in Moultrie. But not quite so segregated, I'm telling you Moultrie was an unusual town. If they didn't have things over at our school…like shop training, we would have to go over to the White school on busses to take shop. I experienced that. Girls and boys had to take shop. We had to learn to draw with graph paper. I have really never been able to understand the purpose for segregation. We were segregated but they [Whites] realized that Black children needed to be exposed to the same education that Whites were getting. So, they would make provisions for us to go to the White school, even into home economics because all of us had to take that. But there were some things that they didn't have at Moultrie High for Negro Youth that they had in the White high school. So, we were bussed to the White school and we

would sit there with the White children. I remember this vividly, [speaking very emphatically] back in the 1940s, we had youth centers for after school activities, such as skating rinks, and whatever else Whites had, they made provisions on our side of town too. I have never been able to understand it.

But it looked like they were checking our abilities. They were really checking us out and they found out that we were not dumb. I used to say they don't want to be responsible for, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste," like the United Negro College Fund slogan says. So, I think they knew what they were doing to us during segregation. You had rich people around town that would say, "Well these things should happen." So, I know that's where they got the money to bus us from one side of town to the other. The city fathers of Moultrie were very liberal back then and they still are. But it still left a right for the civil rights movement to be there. My mother was very involved in it. She went to jail. There were a lot of things wrong with Moultrie, but it was better than many of the other towns. The schools hired very excellent and powerful teachers, and I enjoyed going to Moultrie High School for Negro Youth. Black teachers were inspiring, they were good teachers, and they were good role models. Our teachers made sure we learned and they made sure that as students, we understood that education was very important. Moultrie High School for Negro Youth was an excellent school.

My brother and I were talking the other day and we recalled how in a certain meeting the White superintendent could not say the word "Negro." Every time he attempted to say the word "Negro" it would sound like he was saying

"niggra" and since he never, never could say the word "Negro" properly, they got up and walked out on him [she laughs hardily], now this was long after my time. We would never have attempted to do anything like that [walk out of a meeting] back when I taught in segregated schools.

During those days our teachers were oh my, my…they were powerful! They didn't stop teaching at school...it followed you home. If you did anything at school, nobody else had to tell your momma; your teacher was going to do it. My school was down the street from our house and my father had always said [teasingly] that if he ever had any children they would be able to get to school on time without any worrying. He said that because the same was not true for him. He lived quite a ways from school and he had to plow before he could go to school.

Now, back in Doerun, Georgia the Black students had to be bussed to Moultrie to go to high school. They had a White high school in Doerun, but they did not have a Black high school. Black students in Doerun had to pass by a White high school in order to get to the Black high school in Moultrie. They had to travel 12 miles from Doerun to get to Moultrie. Moultrie has always had good school. Even now you hear of Colquitt County High and its excellence. Colquitt County High has always believed in accountability and that teachers had to teach. They had to teach because we were tested when I was in school. I was a part of the class of 1949; they called us the famous class of 49. [Many of the students from the class of 1949 were very bright and attended college after graduating].

We were really taught in the segregated schools I attended and we did very well with [emphasizing strongly] used books. We never got any new books. When we would get those used books we would get together and decide what pages were missing in certain books and we would write those pages out, and put them in our books. These books were used book, [emphatically] used by the White children, and they would deliberately pull pages out of them. But it did not matter, we learned just as much. White teachers and White students always got new books.

During the time I was in high school they started testing for military service. They [Whites] were alarmed at how well Blacks performed, but what they didn't know is…they gave us a little bit but we had teachers who took that little bit and just made us shine. See, Whites didn't realize that…and I do not see that today. Today, I hear teachers saying, "Well I don't have anything." They didn't have anything back there in those segregated schools either but they made a way. They made something happen. Brown paper bags became paper for children who could not afford paper. Yes, brown paper bags! We would cut those bags out. Those teachers would make us do it, so if anyone said, "Well, I don't have any paper to write on," some would be available … "but most of us would share paper or whatever else we had." Teachers had paper and pencils for the children. But today if students don't have any paper they send them to the office, which does not make any sense to me.

My neighbors' sister attended Fort Valley State College. My oldest sister wanted to go to another college in North Carolina but my parents were not

financially able to send her there…so she chose Fort Valley State College too. They talked about Fort Valley State all the time so there was nothing else for me to consider but to get ready to go to Fort Valley State College. I attended Fort Valley State College and I graduated from there in 1953. I always wanted to be a teacher anyway. I never wanted to be anything else but a teacher. Well, there really wasn't anything else for Blacks to do as a profession…and ah to earn a respectable salary. But teachers really didn't set the standard for higher salaries in Moultrie. In Moultrie, those in the Moultrie manufacturing industries made much more than teachers. But a teacher's salary was certainly respectable.

Black teachers considered themselves professionals, very much so. I was a member of the professional teaching organizations but I'm really not a club person. I didn't join any of the clubs. But Black teachers felt very professional just like the nurse in your town, or the doctor. So ah…teaching is just service. I got a good education. I have good memories of my school days, as a student and as a teacher.

When I was coming along, teachers were really looked up to. They were admired. They ah…well, I'll say this, when I went to college any person could not go. Just because you said I want to go to college didn't mean you would go. The principal in Moultrie had to recommend you. For example, if your father were a bootlegger, you wouldn't be recommended. I don't think it was right, but that's how they did it. So then, most of the students who went to college were a-ok,

church going, and that made college life for me very enjoyable, it was just like I was at home.

But teachers… [pausing long] they were just a different breed. They were expected to be good people and if anything negative ever came upon them they didn't stay. If anything derogatory was associated with any teacher, then that was the end of that teacher's tenure. You couldn't teach their children if you were not well respected within the community. Some parents might have been out there doing negative things with you, but if you were a teacher you were not going to teach their children anymore. I am not very sure when that changed. I cannot remember exactly when I first saw that teachers were not concerned about whether the child grew or not. For so many years that was the ultimate aim in September… "Just how much I'm going to make a child progress."

Well, I think I began to notice a difference just before integration…not during integration. Just before integration, I noticed that the teacher's caliber had changed. Teachers would be downtown dancing with the people who didn't care what they did and they kept their teaching jobs. When I came along, teachers were very well respected in the community and held to the highest standards. I still hold that respect for the teachers I knew.

I wanted to be a teacher but I didn't want to teach at home. My first teaching job was in Eatonton, Georgia [about 35 miles North Northwest of Macon, Georgia]. The home of Joel Chandler Harris that wrote "Brer Rabbit," You know, "Uncle Remus." I taught eighth through twelfth grade, English. In my senior class

I had two students that were older than I because veterans who had not finished high school were coming back from the Korean War and they were allowed to return to school and finish. That was about 1953, I think. My sister and her husband wanted me to teach in Eatonton. They were already there and had been there about a year and a half. Now, this was very interesting because the principal was also our chauffeur. Whenever we went out of town and returned he would meet us in Macon to pick us up because there was no transportation at that time of night from Macon to Eatonton.

The school where I worked was large for a small town like Eatonton. It had all the conveniences of a good school, however, it was a very segregated school with all Black teachers and students, and no Whites were there. Also, students were bussed to the school from throughout the county.

Teaching in Eatonton was a very good experience. The experience there was very inspiring. I really thought all children could learn. I had not experienced a situation in which children couldn't learn. Even when I did my student teaching children learned in the classes I taught. Even if some children tried to show out occasionally, we only had to say that we were going to send for their parents. I taught in Eatonton three and a half years and I really enjoyed teaching there.

I believe there was a special way Black teachers taught to get things across to Black children that many White teachers failed to use. You have to learn the child's style, because even though all children can learn, children don't all learn the same way. Teachers can't just sit in front of students and put it all out and

think the children are going to get it. Sometimes teachers have to arrange all different kinds of ways to teach children. Some children learn with games and I mean they really learn, while others might learn better with a buddy. Many teachers in the old schoolhouses used what they now call peer learning or the buddy system. That was our old system of learning. We took children who understood and paired them with those who didn't fully understand, but we let them choose who they wanted to be paired with…we didn't do it, and did they learn…their test scores showed it! You see, what they're doing now is teaching children the tests…you're supposed to teach children how to take a test. Give them knowledge so they can think for themselves. Unless they change what they are doing now the test is not going to do anything for our children.

I believe our Black teachers in general received an excellent education and one that usually prepared them to become excellent educators. I received an excellent education when I went to college. How else could I have survived at a school as large as Spencer High [located in Columbus, Georgia] coming from a small rural community? I didn't have the life experiences that those children had. Yet, I could go in and teach ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade English comfortably. I taught English Literature and American Literature during my student teaching at Spencer High School in Columbus, Georgia. I was able to do that because our teachers taught us and prepared us before we went out to teach. We had a course on student teaching at Fort Valley State College. Incidentally, a student that had a B.S. Degree from Fort Valley State College could teach all over the world

[braggingly spoken], because they gave us 64 [quarter credits] credit hours of education. All those Black colleges back then were teacher training schools. There were teachers at Fort Valley State College that just sat among students and saw to it that they would pass. Fort Valley State gave us what we needed and I only got my B.S. Degree. I never did get a Masters Degree. Yet, I have certificates in different areas and it never bothered me about the Masters. I knew I was very prepared as an English teacher to go into the classroom and teach because I had some quality teachers. Quality Black teachers, I mean to say. I can just think of how they made me read all those books and all those novels.

I left Eatonton, after three and a half years and I came home to Moultrie. They had Jeanes supervisors in Moultrie. Moultrie High School had opened and there was a new school in Colquitt County too, Charlie A. Grey Elementary School. Mrs. Charlie A. Grey was my third grade teacher and she was an excellent teacher [speaking seriously]; she was there at the school when it was named in her honor in 1956.

I began teaching at Charlie A. Grey Elementary by changing my teaching grade-levels from high school grades to third grade. Really, I got sick while teaching in Eatonton and I had to come home. When I started teaching again after my illness, they asked me to try first grade and I took it. I was not trained for elementary teaching but I didn't have any trouble because the team leader for first grade teachers helped me as much as I needed. She showed me several teaching strategies to use. Charlie A. Grey Elementary was a large school with 12 first

grade classes, 10 or 11 second-grade classes and about 9 or 10 third grade classes. I taught there six years, from 1956 until 1962.

I moved to Worth County during the fall of 1962 and I taught at Holley High School. At that time Holley High served as the high school and elementary school for Blacks in the city of Sylvester, Georgia. So, I went back to teaching English on the high school level at Holley. I was there two years until I left to travel with my husband to Germany. I taught in Germany too, and my experience there as a teacher was most rewarding. It was in Germany where I first experienced integration in schools. Eventually we came back to the States in the mid 70s and they had just integrated the schools in Worth County. I walked into an integrated classroom in Georgia for the first time. Having experienced integration overseas, made it easier when I returned to Worth County. Well, I had found out by working in military schools, "parents, Black or White, want the same thing." They all want to know, "Are you teaching my child?" That's the key…and so that was my key when I came into the Worth County School System. I started work as soon as I walked in the door. I found something else to be true too; the teacher has to be ready to teach when the students walk in the door. You say to them, "The material is on your desks. Are you ready?" You don't give them time to clown. If they didn't have pencil and paper, I gave it to them and when they had some extra change they dropped some in the jar I kept in my classroom so that we could buy more supplies to have on hand when we needed them. That has been my key for discipline too. Start with what you expect from students right away. Also, you

have to be an actor as a teacher. If you're sick, you can't be sick. If you are having problems at home you can't bring them to school. Teachers must always act as if everything is alright. But you have to have the Bible in your desk drawer, not because of the children but because of the people you're working with [a curious smiles appears on her face].

I taught a lot of poor children and we teachers took care of them too. We thought that's what we were supposed to do because it had been done for us. I had seen when I was a student how nurturing the teachers were to the children who did not have very much. So when I started teaching, every child in my room had to experience the same thing, they got what they needed to do their schoolwork even if I had to pay for it. I bought a lot of clothes and thought nothing about, and I still do it now. I still think nothing about it, because the Bible says…and I can't site the exact location…I think it's in Luke…but it says, "He who is given much, much is expected." [Luke 12:28].

I tell you, I had a plus. I think it was because they [White teachers] realized I had worked in integrated schools in the military and had experienced many of the circumstances we were dealing with daily. I found the experience to be a-ok. I didn't run into any problems, not even with the children. I told them the first day of school, "I was pleased with me and if you're not pleased with yourself then something is wrong with you."

I had all my Black pictures on the board because back then they didn't let you teach Black history every day. I had them all up there, Black and White, all

were famous people. You see, they can't do anything to you about famous people. Teachers didn't teach Black history every day. You could only teach about Black in history in February. Now, they didn't just come right out and tell you but you see, you had to send in your lesson plans. And if you taught it, they would try to stop you…I made sure that in everyone of my lessons a Black had anything to do with …then he was in there. They couldn't do anything about it. But the general atmosphere was that there was a time set aside for teaching Black history, otherwise you didn't teach it. Now, they tell teachers if they are going to teach Black history then they need to teach all history. They don't come right out and say it like that but that's what they mean.

We've had teachers that they say were fired because of something else, but they were really fired because they sponsored Black history programs. This happened in the integrated schools with White principals. They used something else but everybody knew what it was. It was racism being acted out. It was there. I didn't experience it personally, it didn't land on me personally but it landed towards me, and what's the difference, I am Black. So, now tell me how is it that all of a sudden you like me and then you look at another Black teacher and say you don't want your child to be in that teacher's class, and it has nothing to do with what the teacher is doing, but rather because the person is Black. Being a Black teacher, you get it from both sides; we're [Black people] something else too, very jealous.

I think there was a Caste System even among Blacks, yes sir ree. "I'm going to tell you what. My experience in segregated Black schools was worst than integration because our principals lied to us. We had to raise money every year for supplies. Yet, every child was allocated so much [a specified amount] for supplies through the superintendent's office and the only reason we didn't get it was no one went to the superintendent and asked for it. Our Black principals said we had to buy paper and crayons, and all that stuff. We discovered later, all the supplies we needed were in the superintendent's office! But teachers in the Black schools were raising money to buy these supplies. The principal would go down there and get supplies from the superintendent's office without telling us and issue them out…and we wouldn't know it. We would just assume they were purchased from the money we raised in our school, until we found out differently."

Now, it didn't happen in Eatonton and it didn't happen in Moultrie, those people had sense, they knew we weren't stupid. But when I came to this other county [the county's name was withheld], I reckon the principal thought I was stupid. And ah…I didn't have a broom or erasers. I said, "What am I going to do?" I spoke out and I said, "I'm not buying a broom; I didn't have to buy one in Eatonton." He then tried to get me to be quiet. He said [whispering almost], "Be quiet I'll get you what you want. Just don't say anything." I saw a lot of this. Also, under a Black administration you had to have a signed statement from a doctor if you stayed out three days. I don't think they [Black principals] were that pressured by the White superintendent. "Black administrations will just kill you." After

integration you could be sick for two weeks and not have to bring a doctor's excuse.

Some Black principals, in fact, most of them believed in excellence for the children and they would treat their teachers in a way that we didn't mind working for them. But all of my experiences were not that positive. I saw some things that I didn't like when we [Black principals] were in charge. About the only thing that I didn't like about integration was that we were limited in our teaching, very much so. As an English teacher, you need to go to the stage for some things, but oh no, that's a no-no. They seem to not want the children to learn how to speak. We couldn't have plays so we could bring them all together to perform. So really, when we first integrated it seemed to me they were not hurting one group…they were hurting all children.

When we left segregation and entered into integration we lost everything. Our children stopped trying. For some reason they thought teachers were supposed to give them something, I don't know where they got that. Children took the attitude that, "She's going to pass me even if I don't do anything." Disciplinary problems became more magnified because Black parents began teaching their children, "That ole White teacher better not hit you." White parents may have done some of the same, but they did it differently. I'll tell you what a White parent will do that a Black parent won't do. They will make that child apologize to the teacher and act like he or she cares. They'll [White parents] make them act right.

A Black child will hate you always, and never apologize, even if he or she sees you now.

I think as far as integration is concerned there were mostly minuses in education. I tell you why I say that, and I still say it today, every ethnic group needs to teach his own. Oh yes, I hear White parents telling me about the different ways of how I inspired their children. They tell me a lot of things…but it was just an old carry-over and I said it too, from the maid to the classroom. I was a teacher but in a sense I was doing what the maid did years ago, "train your children while you were out partying." Someone told me, "Lumpkin you're just crazy." But I just say, "Well, that's just the basics of it. I really didn't do anymore than they expected me to do, and that was 'train their children."

Let me tell you about salaries. I witnessed a White teacher who was a good friend to me. When we were standing near the place where they put the mail, she opened her pay envelope and when she opened it a letter fell out and she said, "Oh, this is for my travel." I said, "For your travel?" She then said, "Yes, they pay us to come down here." That's how it ended. So when I got back to the classroom I thought to myself, "Wait, now what did my friend just say to me?" Later I asked the principal, "Do they pay White teachers to travel from Albany over to Worth County?" He answered, "Not that I know of."

Oh, I believe White teachers were paid more than Black teachers were. I can't prove it but it was common talk everywhere I taught. However, many of them did not have the same credentials or even better credentials than Black

teachers. When we integrated we found out that most of them were working on two-year certificates. All the Blacks had to have four-year certificates or they would be released. And some of them were thought to be pretty good teachers.

Now, we had some fantastic White teachers [she names several] but we also had some fantastic Black teachers. So, it's not true that White teachers were always better than Black teachers. We had some good White teachers and some good Black teachers. I would say that they were equal. There were some Whites that were just there for a salary and we had some Blacks the same way. Good teachers were pillars of the community. They had to be well dressed and possess good moral character. They had to attend church regularly, participate in church activities, in civic affairs, and in summer programs, and they were not just let go in the summertime. In either case, there were just a few sorry teachers.

Some years ago, in the 1930s, and the 1940s, and perhaps during the early 50s in the state of Georgia it was a common practice to have Black Trustees oversee some of the Black segregated schools. They functioned like a Board of Education. When I came out of college in 1953, there were Trustee Boards connected with many Black schools in Georgia. These were elected men and women from the Black community whose duty was to check out the teachers that were employed and see if they were morally, and professionally fit to teach. I can't recall any trustees in Moultrie but they existed in Eatonton. They were in Eatonton and in all of those little towns in that area. Teachers functioned under these trustee boards. These boards, more or less checked teachers out and would approve or

disapprove their appointment as teachers. They would watch teachers to see if they were doing their work at school and to see if they were participating in activities in the community. Then they would tell you near the end of the school year, "You're coming back…because we voted for you, or you are not coming back because of various reasons." You could ask one of them, "Are you on the board of education?" They would reply, "No, I'm a trustee." That's how I found out there were trustee boards.

I just want to say though that when I came to Worth County after we integrated, it seemed to me that every new person that would come in here with an idea…Worth County would jump on board. I took a parenting class and the professor said something that I had never thought of; he said that parents today teach their children not to succeed. I asked how. He indicated that when certain parents talk down [negatively] about the teacher, then as far as the child is concerned, he or she doesn't want to be like that teacher. In doing so, the parents will have impressed a negative upon the child. I had never really thought about that…and you do hear it. Parents will say something good about a basketball player, but how many children are going to end up being a professional basketball player? Not very many at all, but how many might end up being a good teacher…in your community, working to help mold your children? Yet, parents talk against them. The professor said, "You must watch what you say because your children are listening and they will follow what they hear."

In closing, I want to say that I was the first countywide teacher of the year in Worth County. They used to get the teacher of the year from each school but when they put them all together, I was the first teacher to be awarded teacher of the year from all the schools in the county. What I did to help my students and the accolades I received near the end of my career made my 38 years as a teacher worthwhile.

I visited Mrs. Lumpkin at her home on two occasions. As I concluded the interview and left after the second visit I could not help but notice the wall along the entrance hall (foyer area) leading into her home is arrayed with what I counted to be about 20 plaques and certificates of excellence she received during her years of teaching. We paused in the area for about 30 minutes as she provided a personal story associated with receiving many of the honors represented by the awards displayed on the wall. In 1984, when the competition for teacher of the year was open to both Black and White teachers throughout the whole county, she was voted Teacher of the Year for all Worth County; this included White and Black teachers. [Prior to 1984 there was no countywide teacher of the year competition for all schools in the county. The competition was held separately for White and Black schools]. Mrs. Lumpkin was also voted Teacher of the Year at Sylvester Elementary School in 1977.

Portrait

Sallie Mae Tarrence

Allow me to introduce Miss Sallie M. Tarrence. When I first interviewed Miss Sallie Tarrence, she was 80 years old and as alert as any vibrant 20 year old. She taught school 47 years and had been retired 12 years at the time of this interview. Eleven of the twelve years that she was retired, she continued to work as a substitute teacher in the Baker County School System. I interviewed Miss Tarrence twice and as I sat in her den conducting each interview I could not help but notice her den walls arrayed with a number of plaques and certificates she had received over the years for teaching excellence. I observed many pictures of various school activities in which she had participated during her teaching tenure.

She does not move around very much anymore because of lower joint pain due to a bit of arthritis. However, her former high school students describe her during the years she was active as a winning basketball coach with quickness and ease of movement on the court. They also credit her as being, "The best teacher in the school." She was the teacher that everybody wanted, "She would teach so you understood, she was a master teacher." As I inquired of her among her former students, I learned that she was an all star among teachers, very versatile, teaching a variety of subjects including mathematics and science. Aside from

being a teacher and basketball coach, she was an assistant principal for a while. In the schools where she taught, no job was too big for her to handle.

While she was being interviewed I noticed how she eagerly sat up in her chair and expressed her recollections vividly as we discussed her teaching career.

My name is Sallie Mae Tarrence and I was born in Calhoun County near Leary, Georgia. When I was two weeks old my mother passed away. My mother's death was really due to complications from childbirth so my grandparents in Newton, Georgia, which is in Baker County, reared me. So I grew up in Newton, Georgia. My grandmother's name was Lucy Walker and my grandfather's name was Wiley Walker. I was the only child she had, but since then my father had other children so I have some half sisters and brothers. I have three sisters and four brothers now. It's eight of us now, the others live in Florida and up in the Northern states, I'm the only one here. My grandfather was a farmer. When I was born he was renting a farm, he was not a sharecropper, and in 1945 he bought this plantation where I live now.

I started to school in Baker County at one of those one-teacher schools, it was really in a church, and I went there until I was in the third grade. It was quite a distance from my house and I had to walk or they carried me [at that time her parents traveled by a mule drawn wagon]. They got tired of carrying me so I eventually went to Albany to live with my cousin, and from the fourth grade through college I went to school in Albany. I attended high school at what was then Madison High School but it is now known as Monroe Comprehensive High

School. I finished Madison High and then I went to Albany State College. When I graduated from high school it only went through the eleventh grade. We graduated after completing the eleventh grade back then.

"Well, I was inspired to go on to college because my mother was a teacher, even though I never knew her, also, my aunt that I lived with and who helped raise me was a teacher. So, I actually grew up around educators but…ah, I just wanted to be a teacher. I wanted to be a teacher because I thought I could help somebody. I could help my people…I really wanted to be a teacher…I thought it was something real good. At that time teachers were really recognized as "somebody" in the colored place [meaning someone very special and respected in the Black community]."

My teachers in Albany, through elementary and high school were very, very [emphatically spoken] good teachers. The schools I attended were segregated schools, students and teachers both, there were no Whites in them at all. Though I really never gave it serious thought, sometimes it did cross my mind that we often didn't get many supplies because we were racially segregated, but that was the way thing were then and we were making the best of it. When I was a student at my first school every child had to bring his or her own chair to sit in.

When I graduated from high school in 1941, and decided to go to Albany State College, I only attended one year and the following summer at first. We could teach without a college degree back then and ah…I got an emergency teaching certificate and I started teaching when I was16 years old. At that time, I

actually had only one year and a summer of college credits. Back then we had double sessions in college during the summer and I attended both double sessions my first summer in college, and then I started teaching. I finished college and got my B. S. Degree by going on Saturdays and during the summers. I would teach during the regular school year and then I would go back to college each summer. I finished real quickly because I didn't miss any weekends or summers. It was very important for me to finish that degree. After I got my B.S., I went to Fort Valley State College, Florida A and M University (FAMU), and different schools every summer. I was given grants to go to school and I would go.

The first place I taught was in a wooden church in Baker County [she emphasizes the church was built of wood] and it was my first teaching position. That church is not there today; they've torn the wooden church down and a brick church is there now. The year was 1942. I taught from…well, I would say what is now K through seventh grade and I had to teach all subjects. We didn't call it kindergarten back then, children just were sent to school at a certain age. When I first started teaching parents would send the little four and five-year old children to school. I would work with them in the morning time, and of course they were little fellows and I would put them to sleep, and cover them up with coats and things in the afternoon, and ah…then I would do my other teaching with the larger children. I had different subjects and different classes [she taught young students and older students by separating them into groups based on their age and the time

of day] …some I would combine because there wasn't anybody but me, and I had to teach all subjects up through the seventh grade. I taught there for three years.

After completing the seventh grade students would move to Newton High School, which was located in the city of Newton, Georgia. Of course, Newton High School was an all Black segregated school in 1942. I moved from out in the county to Newton High School in 1945 and at that time we didn't have but one real school building, and it housed the high school students. When I arrived there, they were teaching elementary students in two other wooden church buildings that were located on the campus. I taught all subjects in the fourth grade in one of the wooden church buildings when I went to Newton. More than one grade was taught in that church. I would separate the students by putting those that were in one grade-level in one corner of the room and those that were in a different grade-level in another corner in the same room. It was fairly common for Black schools to be in churches at that time. We didn't have adequate school buildings or other community facilities other than our church buildings, so we used the churches. They were the only places available for Blacks to school their children. Many years later we had two junior high schools and one high school. One was down at the edge of the county in Springfield [a small community settlement located a few miles outside of the city of Newton, Georgia] and one in Elmo Dale [another small community located farther out from the town of Newton but still in Baker County] and they went as far as the ninth grade. After completing the ninth grade students had to attend the high school in Newton.

The elementary school where I taught out in the rural…was only open for attendance seven months out of the year, but the high school in Newton was open nine months each school year. Many children had to stop and do farm work, and that's why the schools didn't stay open any longer than seven months each year.

When students moved [advanced] from the schools out in the rural, to the schools in Newton, a bus would carry some students but some of the others had to go to different places to finish high school since the schools in Newton couldn't accommodate all students ready for high school. Many students had to go live with their relatives elsewhere so they could be near a high school; some went to Arlington, Georgia, and to other different towns and places where they had a high school for Blacks. We had a school bus owned by a person [private citizen] and it carried the children to the schools in Newton.

When I was growing up, Black people thought education was very important. The training I got at Albany State really prepared me to be a good teacher. I had very good instructors. Everywhere I taught the parents were very interested in education and they thought that I was doing such a good job with the kids. I had all the cooperation from the parents that I needed.

There were very few teachers with degrees when I was teaching. Back when I first started teaching we could teach when we finished high school. So I was among the higher-level teachers when I started teaching with that college degree because some teachers had not finished college. But many of them

continued their education…they would go to summer school and the Saturday classes just as I had done.

We had what we called Jeanes supervisors, but when I first started teaching we did not have one. Before the Jeanes supervisors and during the time when I was selected as a teacher, we had trustees. Trustees were men of high standards in the community and you had to meet with them and they would interview before you could teach. These trustees were not teachers; they were just regular common people who had high status in the community. Some of them didn't have much education, but they had gained prominence in the community and they had to know about you before you could teach. They would tell you if you were worthy to teach year after year. Well, ah…they would even come out some time and visit the school. When I was first selected as a teacher, they came in and interview me. I met with them only once and I didn't have to meet with them anymore. They arranged an initial interview and when I first came down to Baker County to meet with them they asked me several questions regarding my educational background, religious beliefs, and several other personal questions. They interviewed me only once. The interview went well for me but …they ah…thought I was mighty young to handle kids. After the interview they said, "I know you're well trained because you went to college, we believe you are able to teach but we also feel that you might be too young to handle those big children." They knew my aunt and grandparents. My aunt told them, "don't worry about Sallie, she can handle them." My aunt just told them, "if you just let her go to the school she will handle them,"

and they did. Once I was hired that was it, I was there teaching in the Springfield Community until they moved the school. I taught there for three year.

When I left the rural school in Springfield, I went to New Salem Junior High School in Elmo Dale, Georgia, which was in Baker County too, and there I taught grades seventh through tenth. The school there was a little three-room schoolhouse. I taught there until they closed the school and moved the students to Newton. Eventually, they combined all the little country one-teacher [rural] schools that had been in the churches and moved them to Newton. The lower grades were still conducted in churches but they were now all very close together in Newton, and we had more room.

The books we were given in the Black schools were old books, they were usually collected from one of the White...[pausing] you know, those other schools. I had it pretty good though because they were nice to me. I remember when the White school moved; they let me get a lot of materials from that old White school, and of course, that's what we used at our school. I even taught home-making classes and we would have different activities where students would learn many different things about cooking, sewing, and many other things that went along with taking care of the home. Parents would give different fund raising projects [sponsor or hold different sales] and raise money to help with the cost of these activities. They even bought a sewing machine for me so I could teach the kids how to sew.

We had a wooden stove with a flat top and I would cook on top of that stove at school. We cooked on it often, oh yes we did, and it also served as our heater during the winter. Students brought their lunches from home. I bought many of the things we had to use in school. I bought many clothing, shoes, and ah…paper and pencils too. My students were never without those things, many of them didn't have basic personal supplies but I always kept extra pencils and paper for them. If they didn't have paper and pencils they could always come to me and get them so they could do their work. In those one-room schools you were the teacher and the principal. We had to make our records every month and pass them in to the superintendent's office. The superintendent was a White man. The superintendent never visited our schools. No, he never did. When we got a Jeanes supervisor she would come around. She was Black.

Before we built the new high school in Newton we used army barracks to house all the children. I think they got them from Fort Benning Army Base. I can't remember the year they built the new high school, but it was a new brick building for Black students. When I first went there the school only went through the eleventh grade and then later they added a grade, so then it went from first grade through the twelfth grade, but it was still segregated. For many years we were required to visit students' homes. We had to visit all of our students. Most of the students were poor too. That happened for quite a while.

When integration started I was teaching at the Black high School in Newton. It was called "Newton Colored School." That was the name of the school.

Baker County High was the White high school and it was a very nice school. Everything was all right in the segregated school; it was the best we could do…so it was all right. Students worked hard and they were very attentive. "But the thing about it is we did not have adequate teaching materials and resources to work with. That was one of the main handicaps. White schools usually had more materials and resources than we did." I was the homeroom teacher for the eighth grade then, and I taught mathematics. I would go over to their school [the White school] where they had old books that they had discarded and stored in an old building. We would go over there and pick out certain books and get them for our children. When I started teaching in Newton they really didn't have books. I had only one algebra book in the classroom when I started teaching algebra. I wrote everything on the blackboard and that's the way they got their lesson. But I was determined that they would learn; I wanted them to have a good education and be prepared before they went to college.

"When integration first took place in Baker County I was teaching at the Black high school. They integrated the schools in Baker County in 1971. When we first started to integrate they wanted to send the Black children over to the White school. They [the superintendent] wanted the highest scoring Black children to integrate the White school first. I don't know why they wanted the highest-ranking students instead of just any child that wanted to go. That didn't work too well because there were other Black students who wanted to go too. Many Blacks didn't like the fact that they wanted a certain group to go. They [Blacks] wanted

anyone who wanted to go to be given a chance to do so. I had to work with the superintendent to get the records of the highest scoring Black children to send over to the White school because that's what they wanted.

Then of course, a civil rights march came to town. People from Albany came over to Newton and led the marches and the civil rights meetings. The civil rights marches were about school integration. They marched for integration of the schools. We didn't have any killings or bombing or anything like that you know, but some Black people were jailed. Times were bad then, everybody was real tensed up at that time. Many Whites spoke out against integrating the schools. Whites in Baker County didn't want it [integrated schools]."

Blacks wanted to integrate schools in Baker County because they thought they would get a better education. We knew White schools had more resources than we had at Black schools. That's what I think. Just a few Blacks thought White teachers were better teachers. The first year they integrated schools in Newton we had all boys' and all girls' schools. They separated the boys from the girls. The way they did it was they sent the boys to our school [the Black school] and the girls to the White school. I taught at the boys' school. This arrangement only lasted one year. I believe the idea behind separating the boys and girls was to keep Black boys from courting White girls. After that first year they mixed the boys and the girls. Even after they integrated, Black students were not treated well. They were segregating them and over at the White school Blacks even had to sit in

certain places. Over at the Black school children could just sit anywhere they wanted to.

Also, shortly after integration, they passed a law that we couldn't discipline the children like we had been. We couldn't paddle them anymore. No, we couldn't whip them anymore, and I think it was because they didn't want Black teachers whipping Whites; at least that's what I gathered from it.

Soon after that White folks built a private school. Those Whites who were able sent their children to the private school, which was located way out in the county. That was to keep them from going to school with Black children. "The private school was built to maintain segregation." Blacks couldn't go to the private school even if they could afford it. I think the White parents and some rich business people built the private school, I don't know exactly who built it, but they built it.

"When they integrated schools I didn't change anything. Whatever I taught before school integration I taught it the same way afterward. I didn't teach Black children any differently than I taught White children and I know I was as good a teacher as those White teachers in my school. My credentials were equal to or better than theirs. I know when I taught senior mathematics at the all boys' school the year we first integrated, several White boys told me they learned more mathematics that year than they did the whole while they were over at the other [White] school."

The Black community saw teachers as "somebody special." At that time they looked up to Black teachers…they gave them high respect, much more than they do now. Black teachers nurtured Black students. Oh yes, yes, yes. I tried to instill within them…everything that I knew, how to live, how to dress, I did all I could to help them. I tried to instill within them how to carry themselves and get prepared for the world, you know, prepare for different jobs that they were going to have. Many other Black teachers had this same philosophy; in fact very few did not. Most Black teachers did what they could for their children.

When I first started teaching my paycheck was $30.00 for the month. That was in 1942 and I was 16 years old. That was a lot of money [she laughs hardily]. Others who didn't have college training got $25.00. We didn't make a lot of money but we were proud to be teachers. Over the years Black teachers have always felt that they were professionals. I was a member of the NEA [National Education Association], and the GAE [Georgia Association of Educators], and all of those were professional organizations. I am a life member; when I retired I became a life member. I'm still a member of all those organizations. I still get the benefits that active teachers get from those organizations.

Some of the school administrators treated White teachers better than they did Black teachers. I never, for myself…that I can recall…experienced any racial problems after schools were integrated. I heard that Black teachers and White teachers were paid differently. This was commonly heard among Blacks. I really don't have anything to substantiate it but it was just what happened until sometime

after integration, I always heard. I was never denied a position in teaching because of my race. It was only after integration that I sometimes saw the superintendent at the school where I taught.

The only thing that I wanted was better resources for the kids. I felt like we would get more if we were integrated…and we did. We got a lot more to work with after integration. We got things that they always had and we did not have until after the schools were integrated and the other [White students] kids came over. Segregated Black schools didn't provide as much as the integrated schools did, in terms of resources. I don't see where White teachers [alone] improved education for Blacks…[pausing long] but integration did.

I was for integration, yes. I didn't have to make any special preparations for it. I didn't have to go back to school to take more courses or anything like that. I just continued doing what I had always done as a teacher.

I never wanted to do anything but be a teacher. That was my desire. From a kid I always wanted to be a teacher. I taught many young people who are now judges, lawyers, doctors, and so on. I never had any parents to come to school and fuss at me, but there were others who had it done. I ended my teaching career in Baker County after 47 years. I taught 47 years in the classroom and I retired in 1989. I've worked 11 years in the classroom as a substitute teacher and with assistant principals, and other school staff since then. I enjoyed my teaching experience, I was the coach of the girls' basketball team and we always had a state winner. I coached basketball for a number of years, I taught mathematics and other

subjects, and I was the librarian for a while. I was appointed as an assistant principal for a while, but athletic coaching was what I enjoyed most, I especially enjoyed track, and basketball.

I always had good teams too. My teams were outstanding and Whites and Blacks recognized them. Oh, I really enjoyed it, but I can also recall the difficult times. I remember the time we didn't have any heat on our busses. We had old busses that would breakdown in the cold and I sometimes had to make a fire on the side of the road to warm the kids. These were county busses. They [the White schools] had used them and passed them on to us.

I was even teacher of the year at one time. I have many awards from teaching. I enjoyed those 47 years. I've always wanted to help somebody and I was able to accomplish that through teaching. I dedicated my life to the profession.

Miss Tarrence must have been a supper educator. The walls in her home were filled with plaques, certificates, group pictures from school events and activities. To me, the pictures were an indication of how much she was loved by her students. She even showed me hundreds of individual pictures that her former students had given her. She committed 47 years to teaching and I believe that she was a positive influence on many students who will always remember her.

Portrait

Ralph Ford

Allow me to introduce Mr. Ralph Ford. Mr. Ford was a dedicated teacher with a wide range of teaching experiences. He is an emotional man with a high degree of sensitivity about many of his teaching and life experiences. Often he shed tears when relating some of his encounters with poor Black students during his career as a teacher.

Although Mr. Ford taught for 34 years in public schools in various counties throughout Georgia, he was educated entirely in the state of Florida and had dreamed of becoming a great football coach. Through hard work and persistence his dream came true. His parents instilled within him a work ethic that led him to understand that hard work and persistence were important factors for professional success. Throughout his career as a coach and educator, he advocated principles that engendered hard work as a key to professional success.

He is a member of Bethel A.M.E. Church in Albany, Georgia, where he is active in one of the senior choirs and the Sunday School. Mr. Ford is just as intense about the Sunday School lessons as he was when he was teaching and coaching football. He is a religious man who loves working in his church and especially participating in a variety of Sunday school activities.

My name is Ralph Ford. I was born in 1931 in Live Oak, Florida, in a small community called Claywoods. I was the only child born from my daddy's first marriage. He married twice and he had three children from his second marriage. So I have two sisters and one brother. They are the only relatives I have now. My parents were farmers, they owned the land out there in the country where we lived and when my daddy and mother got married they started farming. They farmed until they separated years later after I became an adult.

I didn't attend schools at Live Oak because I lived out in the rural. So I went to the county schools in Suwannee County. It was an eight-teacher school [he meant that the school had eight grades, not eight teachers]. The school went to the eighth grade, first through the eighth grade. Only Black children attended the school. "You had one teacher covering all those grades and she was a very good teacher" [emphatically spoken]. She taught all the subjects, first through eighth grade. The school was in a building that was built by the Black community. It was a one-room school building and all the grades were in that one-room school. We walked to school. The kids that went there were in walking distance. So ah…we never had a bus or anything like that…we walked every morning. The teacher lived right up the road from us in our neighbor's home, which was in seeing distance, and she walked to school every morning. She could see the school from where she lived.

White children went to school in the next little town, which was called Wellborn, Florida, and they had busses, and those busses would pass us as we

walked to school every morning. I finished elementary school in Suwannee County and then I went to the adjoining county for junior high school. I went there for a year and then I went to Jacksonville, Florida, to attend high school. I started the ninth grade at Stanton High School in Jacksonville, Florida. They had only two Black high schools in Jacksonville…that was Stanton and Gilbert. So I went to the oldest one, Stanton. Both were Black schools and segregated. The high schools in Jacksonville went to the twelfth grade and I finished Stanton High in 1948.

When I was back in school Black teachers made sure we got home when we left school, they made sure we got home on time, and they made sure we would climb those stairs and go ahead of them up to our classrooms. That was my experience at Stanton. I firmly believe that segregated Black schools had excellent teachers. "Teachers were surrogate parents, they were just like momma and daddy. They had the authority to do more than teach you." I holds steadfast that, "Those ole Black teachers back then were superb! They were more than good; they were excellent; very excellent [emphasizing his words]. People looked up to the teachers back then, especially the men; teachers were respected in church, and everywhere they went in the community. When they walked the streets people would turn their heads and looked to see where they were going, and who they were talking with. It was something special to be a teacher."

The attitudes toward teaching as a profession ever since I've been in education have been good. Almost all schoolteachers considered themselves professionals. I am proud to be a part of the teaching profession. All blacks were

asked to join the professional organization when they were hired. You had to join. And from that indication it appeared that we had pride because that's the first thing we did when we got hired was joined the professional organization, and so I think that was a plus for us, the professional organizations, cause all of us joined time we were hire. I was a member of each one.

Well, it was after high school I decided to go to college. Coach Small inspired me to go to college. He was the football coach at Stanton High and he was a minister. I played for him and he was just like a principal to me. He led me and guided me and put me on the road to college.

During my senior year in high school the principal gave me and several other boys a leave of absence for football camp. Actually, Coach Small got us excused from school to go down and participate in spring training with Bethune Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida. We had spring training with the Bethune Cookman football team and then I came back and graduated from Stanton High School. We trained with them for six weeks. I made the team in the spring before I graduated. I left Stanton High and went on to Bethune Cookman College. I played football four years with Bethune Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida. I wasn't by myself, some of the others that went with me made the team too.

I knew I was going to be in education or doing something in the coaching field with health and science because I wanted to be a coach, like coach Small. He led me and he was an inspiration to me. But, I was drafted into the military service

during my freshman year in college. So I went to Korea and stayed two years and then I came back and finished college. I started assisting the football coaching staff at Edward Waters College in Jacksonville, Florida. There I worked as an assistant football coach and dormitory counselor. I wanted to be something; I wanted to do a little bit better than my parents did as farmers. I worked at Edward Waters College for three years.

Then a lady from Meriwether County in Georgia called me, she heard about me someway or another, I don't know where it was or who it was that told her about me. She asked me if I wanted to come up to Meriwether County to coach. That's up at Greenville, Georgia, about 20 miles east of LaGrange, Georgia. I went up there and accepted the job. That was my first job as a head coach, but it was really my second job as a teacher because I taught at Edward Waters College for a little while.

So I started teaching and coaching in Greenville, Georgia at the high school in 1958, I had to teach classes and I was the head football coach. I taught ninth through twelfth grades at the Black high school. The school was in the city but all the county kids had to attend that same school. They had to bus the rural kids to school. I taught and coached there one year and then I took a position in Baxley, Georgia. I thought the coaching situation was better in Baxley, so I stayed there three years. I left there and came to Camilla, Georgia. I taught and coached there for eight years. So, I actually have teaching and coaching experience in several counties in Georgia and there were some similarities in all the schools. I had a

championship team in each place. I had a championship team at Baxley in basketball. I made it in basketball with the boys but not with the girls, and I almost made it in football. I had a similar experience in Camilla, Georgia…I won the conference in football in Camilla, but I didn't win the championship. These were all segregated Black schools.

When I left Camilla, I went to Leesburg, Georgia, in Lee County. That was during the change when they started mixing the races in the schools. They began integrating schools in Lee County the year I was hired; I think it was in 1970. Lee County provided my first experience in an integrated situation. It was at Lee County Middle Training School, which used to be the Black high school in Lee County, but the year I came there they turned it into a middle school for Black and White students. Black and White teachers, and students started [integrating] going to different schools depending on whatever grade-level they were in.

I really thought school integration started out as a good thing. That's how I felt about it. I thought it was going to be what we were looking for to solve some of our problems such as inadequate resources. But other elements entered the picture, and those elements caused partiality, they caused prejudices, and things of that nature and these partialities have continued, and even today they continue to exist. Some of the parents that brought their kids to Lee County Upper Elementary were staunch segregationists and they had instilled hatred in a lot of their kids, these were White parents. When the kids got out their cars, many of them, instead of going to school went to the swamp that was located down back of the school.

And ah…it took some doing to get some of them out of the swamp and back to school [his voice is accentuated as he speaks]. Finally…I think one of my better friends now is a boy that was one of the hardest ones I had to deal with. I finally convinced him to come out of the woods and go in the bathroom in the school gymnasium, and I let him sit there a period or two before I let him come out. Later on that boy took a shine to me and when he left this area he often called me long distance. He got to be a friend of mine just on account of that situation that dealt with mixing the races. This was a White boy.

After integration took place I had to be more precise. I had to convince them [both White students and my principal] that I knew what I was teaching and show them [the principal was White] how it's supposed to be done. But I can say, [pausing long] I never experienced a principal treating Blacks differently than how he treated Whites. He confided in me in a lot of situations where race was be involved, and he was very acceptable to changes. In that light he ah…really worked very well with me.

I really was for integrated schools because of the circumstances I had experienced in Black segregated schools. In the first school [segregated school] I attended we had to raise money in first through eighth grade. Many times our teachers didn't have the materials to teach us. I never will forget Luweegee Smiles [the spelling here may be incorrect], that's an old speller that Whites had in their school and when they threw those books out our teachers got them and brought them to our school. When my teacher issued that speller to me it didn't have a

back on it. It was ragged but it was a speller [emphasizing his words], a Luweegee Smiles Speller. On the cover it had a picture of a Black boy grinning, but I got a speller. I learned to spell out of that Luweegee Smiles book.

From my perspective integration helped us because we were able to get equally what White children were getting. We got to partake in the whole pie. Whether we got our equal slice or not…we got started under a system that gave us hope. Now, White teaching alone didn't necessarily improve education for Blacks but I think that White teachers provided us with some opportunities that we would not have received unless there was integration.

Now I heard some of the sly remarks that Whites kids made during integration. But many times in the classroom students said things you heard but pretended you didn't. Whites have often made remarks in the classroom but I overlooked them and just continued on, I mean racial slurs. You just take them and go on. That happens now.

I really don't think White teachers were any better than Black teachers…I think they had an opportunity to get hold to materials that we were not able to get because of our situation [meaning Blacks being segregated and discriminated against in the South]. They were able to get materials, make things, make drawings, perform writing exercises, and make things that would help them improve in the classroom, but we were denied those things because we didn't have the funds to get them.

Disciplinary procedures didn't change that much when we integrated because if a Black boy got paddled for doing wrong, a White boy got it too. Now I understand in other situations it was different but that was clearly done in my situation. What one got paddled for, Black or White, if another was guilty he got paddled too.

Going back before integration, we had to visit every student we taught. I had to go to there homes and meet their parents. Back then parents were very acceptable…they looked forward to the teacher coming to their homes and talking about their children. I really enjoyed that…I really enjoyed going by visiting parents and talking with them.

Black parents really held education in high regards, it was important to them, yes sir, very much so, and they believed in doing what was right. If they thought the teacher had more insight into what their children were doing wrong they wanted the teacher to take care of the problem and tell them about it later. They didn't want you to wait, they wanted you to jump on it right then and get it over with. "Don't let them get away with nothing." They strongly believed in their children minding the teacher. However, this didn't carry over into the integrated situation…not as strongly as it was before integration.

In this sense we lost a little bit. We lost that fellowship we had with parents. We don't have that fellowship we had when it was all Black. Perhaps Integration as it actually happened ended up not being the best thing for us. The idea of integration in the beginning was to improve education for Blacks but it

never got to the point where it improved our education beyond a reasonable doubt [perhaps meaning integration did not improve education for Blacks as they had expected it would].

I worked under Jeanes supervisors and I thought those that I had an opportunity to work with were some good ones too, I hope they are still living. They were mostly Black women. I never worked under a male Jeanes teacher…in my experience all of them were women. A few of them were White women. They were top-notch educators and they taught me a lot. They would meet with teachers and I recall how they watched my roll book. They reviewed roll books for correctness and neatness they watched how I wrote the kids names down, how I treated them, how I graded them, and they made sure that my grading system was appropriate…that I had enough stuff to grade a kid honestly. They were nice about how they related things to me and they would come often and check on how we were grading students. Jeanes teachers visited often and they went from one teacher to another and when they finished their rounds they would start over again. I looked forward to seeing them. I don't know exactly when they went out of existence. I think superintendents and school boards kind of fazed them out, but it probably would be good if we still had them.

Also, I had earlier worked under trustees. As I recall the purpose of the Black trustees for Black schools was to see that each room had adequate heating. They made sure there was an adequate supply of wood so kids could make a fire and keep the rooms heated all day long; that was their main objective. Their

second objective was to see [pausing] that teachers were on their jobs doing what they were supposed to do. One of their jobs was to see that those kids that were sent to school were obeying their teachers. Also, trustees were concerned about what time teachers got to work and what time they would leave, and they watched that on a daily basis. Someone was there to see that that was done all the time. Some of the trustees that supported corporal punishment would help teachers get the type of switches [small branches or limbs from trees used for whipping children] from out in the woods so we could whip children but not seriously hurt them. They wanted teachers to have something they could use to keep order in the classroom and they wanted schools to run smoothly.

The trustees were prominent people in the community that were picked by the superintendent and some of his associates. They were usually selected from among leading preachers, business people, or farmers who lived in the school community. If the school was in a certain community, then the trustees were selected from that community. This was in Georgia where we had these trustees.

I heard a lot about the difference in pay between Black teachers and Whites teachers. I heard a lot of talk about school principals and I know before integration White principals were paid more than the Black principals. I think their salary gap was $500.00. I think Whites were definitely paid more. The teachers now, ah…it's according to what title you held. If you headed a department or held a title over something you might have gotten a few dollars more. But if you were on the same level…same level teachers earned salaries that were about the same.

I believe the education I got from college really prepared me to be a good teacher. I do believe so. I have never done all that I was taught to do in college. Bethune Cookman College really prepared me for classroom teaching. Even today teachers could do much more in the classroom if they had the time to do it. Today teachers in the classroom spend more time doing bureaucratic stuff than teaching.

I really believe I made a positive impact on the lives of many young people because a few that I have been lucky enough to see through the years have told me. I don't know if all of them would have the same positive expressions but I have not had any negative responses from what I have tried to do as a teacher. I have been thanked many times by former students for what I tried to do for them when I was teaching. [Speaking intensely serious with emphasis] "I enjoyed every minute of it."

Now what has changed in education? First of all I think that colleges are making a mistake in limiting the number of credit hours required to become a teacher. I had to take all those courses to become a teacher. I have retired now and I am still learning. I think that "fly-by-night learning" to become a teacher is a no-no and if I would look to find fault, I think it would lie with those who oversee higher education.

My teaching philosophy was this…[pausing] my basic principle of teaching was to educate and to help young people find out what they wanted to do with their lives. That was my goal. So I went in the classroom sincere, wholeheartedly, I wasn't half-stepping, I went in there and I thought that my little bit that I had to

offer would motivate a person, and would further his or her life's planning. I had students who were very young when I started off with them and they ended up as ministers and I've had ministers to tell me that I helped push them toward their mastery in ministry. That was my philosophy; I've always been serious about helping children find themselves in life. Basically, that's my basic philosophy.

I taught 34 years and I did the best I could do. I know there were those out there better than I was…they did better than I did, but I was serious about teaching and I put my life in it. Many times in my career I found that I was a counselor as well as a teacher. That was part of our job in the Black community. We had to be counselors. We had to help those who needed help, and there were a lot of things we had to help students with. I had to help boys on the football team, and they're supposed to be big rough and tumble boys. I have had big football players to go behind the gymnasium and cry because of problems. I had to nurture…I had to learn to be a counselor. My experiences have not been a bed of roses because I worked very hard as a teacher. I retired in 1991, after 34 years in the classroom.

Mr. Ford has so much passion for his profession so much compassion for the students he once taught. He became very emotional as he spoke of his experiences as a teacher. Several times his eyes would fill with tears as he recounted certain experiences he had while teaching. I could tell that he had been a committed teacher who loved his profession and the students he taught.

Portrait

Isaiah Isom

Allow me to introduce Mr. Isaiah Isom. Mr. Isom grew up very poor, and though he anguished about his low economic status and struggled with academics while in high school, he loved school. Mr. Isaiah Isom is an even-tempered and seemingly easy-going gentleman. When he speaks, he projects a heavy baritone voice that sends forth words that are slowly spoken and very clearly enunciated. His soft-spoken voice pitch rarely inflects but remains constant.

I interviewed him at his home, which is located in a very tidy, well-groomed, middleclass neighborhood in Valdosta, Georgia, and I was captured by his humbleness. He frequently expressed gratitude for God bringing him from lowly beginnings and allowing him to become a teacher and touch the lives of so many young people. In spite of a limited education, his parents understood its importance and insisted that all their children complete school and get a good education. Mr. Isom taught high school shop classes and industrial arts from 1958 until 1988, and retired after teaching 30 years in the Valdosta City School System.

I am the oldest of seven children, five boys and two girls. My parents were poor and though my father worked very hard all of his life, he just didn't earn

much money. Still, my father was a very good plumber and I picked up the plumbing trade through working with him for a number of years. My mother was a housewife. That's where I picked up my skills for cleaning house and a bit of cooking, and all of the domestic things that go along with what children had to do long in those days [in the 1930s and 1940s].

In fact, I came from very humble beginnings. As a young man growing up very poor in Baxley, Georgia, I remember, our house was so dilapidated that my mother didn't want the teacher to come and see ah…where we lived because the porch was almost impassable. Our home was in need of much repair but my parents simply could not afford to fix it up. We had a little plank that we walked down to get from the front porch to the ground and she didn't want the teacher to see where we lived. So she met the teacher at a local café and they had a talk about me and that's where they made the deal to help me any way they could. They both knew that I was going to have to have help in order to make it through school. We were just dirt poor and my family needed help. And I thank God that somebody helped me and what that did was inspire me help to other students.

Several teachers suggesting I would make a good teacher inspired me to go into the field of education. When I was a senior in high school, many times when a teacher was out and we couldn't find a substitute they'd ask one of the seniors to go down and take over the class. I remember distinctly I had a fourth grade class that I was sitting in for a teacher and after the class period finished one of the

teachers came to me and said, "You would make a good teacher because I noticed that those students were really in control. I don't know what you were teaching them but at least you had their attention and I didn't hear the noise that I usually hear when a substitute comes in." So that sort of led me into the teaching field. That's what my mother really wanted; she wanted me to be a teacher.

I must say, I really loved school, I didn't miss a day from first grade to ah…ninth grade and I missed only one sick day in the ninth grade. So I had only one missed day from the time I started until the time I finished high school. My attendance was excellent and I received an award for excellence in attendance when I graduated from Appling County Training School in 1952. Though my parents were not well educated it was very important to them for us to go to school and they insisted that we get an education, so we had to just do it.

I attended public schools in Baxley, but these were not rural schools, they were in the city. My elementary school went from the first through the sixth grade. Of course, this was a segregated all Black school. Back then teachers were very stern and very concerned about us getting an education. And ah…I sort of liked that because it meant the students attending those classes were well disciplined. I distinctly remember one teacher in the seventh grade, I guess you would call that the beginning of junior high now. She stressed cleanliness and she stressed proper dress, and you didn't go into her classroom with your collar opened. She'd make you fasten it and your shoes had to be shined, and ah…you had to wear clean

clothes, not necessarily new clothes because mine were very ragged and patched up, but they had to be clean. I liked her philosophy and I adopted it in my classroom when I started teaching. I had a lot of fun with it and I made a lot of strides in upgrading students' ideas about cleanliness.

When I was in school we had hand-me-down books from the [White] high school and from the [White] elementary school. At Baxley Training School, which was the Black school, we never got new books; we always received hand-me-down books from the White schools. We got used books in both elementary and high school. We knew it because we would find names of students whose families we knew already written in the books. By being in the same city we knew some of the White families because some of our people worked for them and we'd find books with their children's names in them.

And ah…we ah…had no public transportation like the Whites had. I can remember distinctly there were Black students that lived five to ten miles from their school and they would have to walk while busses with White children passed them as they walked. Sometimes they [the White students] would pick at them [the Black students] on their way to school but those Black children would walk on. In winters when it was very cold we would build a fire in our potbelly stove and we would warm water so that when students who had to walk long distances arrived, they could put their hands into the warm water and thaw them. Sometimes it

would take them a while to thaw their hands, yet, White students of course rode busses that I assume had heat.

Years later there was a private citizen [a Black man] that started a bus system that came from one of the utmost west parts of the county, and he would carry students to school on his makeshift bus. There was no official bus transportation provided for Black students until [pausing and thinking], I guess it was in 1947. That's when we were provided with one bus that ran from North to South across the county and of course, it was a hand-me-down bus. Naturally, being an old bus they had gotten all the use they [Whites] could get out of it so they let us [Blacks] have it then, and sometimes it would break down. The bus driver had to be supplemented by the trustees of the school with funds they raised throughout the community because the White-operated school system or perhaps the county was not willing to pay the Black bus driver, or perhaps they did not have the funds to do so. Trustees for the schools also raised funds to buy wood and coal used for heating the classrooms. Often we had to go into the woods to find wood to fuel the fire.

I always wanted to go to college but I didn't know what subject I wanted for a major. I decided to attend Savannah State College in Savannah, Georgia. I had a background in plumbing and that's what I went to college to get a degree in. Well, it just so happened that the courses in plumbing had been dropped from the curriculum at Savannah State College that June previous to when I went in

September thinking they still offered the plumbing courses. So I looked around but I didn't know what I was going to do because the course I wanted to take was no longer there. So, one of the advisors asked me, "Why don't you go into the field of Industrial Arts?" Well, I didn't know what that was being very poor and not having hardly any exposure to very many things. But coming from a segregated Black school I had passed by the White high school several times and I had seen a big sign on the building saying "Industrial Arts." I always I wondered, "What in the world is Industrial Arts?" After the advisor asked me about it and when I saw it in the college catalog I said, "That's the field I'm going into just to see what they do in Industrial Arts." Well, when I started taking courses in Industrial Arts, I found it was something that I was very familiar with because not only was my daddy a plumber, he was a cement finisher and I learned to lay bricks, he was a carpenter and I learned carpentry, I learned to measure, and certainly in the plumbing trade I had to measure accurately. So the only thing that I didn't have experience in was using the big machines that were there, and that came just by having the desire to want to know about the course. In 1958, I graduated from Savannah State with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Industrial Arts. I can say, I think Savannah State prepared me very well to be a teacher. I was very good at what I did.

Many years ago when I was a little boy, an insurance man used to come to our house. He lived in Waycross [Georgia] and I was very impressed with that

man. Back in the mid 1930s and early 1940s, he was the only man I saw dressed up on a Tuesday morning, or a Wednesday morning, or a Friday morning, and I just admired him. I said, "I want to be just like him. I want to be able to dress up on Tuesday and not just on Sunday." I had these crazy fantasies as a little boy but that was what was on my mind. He was a role model for me and with the help and support of others, and through educating myself I eventually had an opportunity to do that [dress-up, look nice, and go to work].

When I finished Savannah State College I returned home to look for a job. The trustees came to me and asked me if I would consider accepting a job in Appling County [Mr. Isom's home county]. However, a fellow from Fitzgerald, Georgia, had already filled the position they offered me. They wanted to fire that fellow and give his teaching position to me. They said, "You are a hometown boy, ah…if you want that job you can get it." I told them, "No thank you. I'll try to find a job on my own." I didn't want to disrupt another man's livelihood that had a family to support. I don't believe in the favoritism displayed by the trustees wherein you put out one to get another. But that was the power of the trustees and they could do that.

I began looking for a job and I sent out several resumes but I did not get any immediate responses. Seemingly, nothing was coming through for me. Eventually, I decided I was not going to get a high school teaching job. So, a couple of weeks before school started I went on vacation and stayed a week. When

I came back from vacation I had received a call from the Industrial Arts Director at Savannah State College, saying that he had a job for me in Valdosta, Georgia. I returned from vacation on a Saturday and he asked if I could I be in Valdosta, Georgia the following Monday morning. Naturally, that Monday morning I made my way to Valdosta and he told me who to see for an interview. From that interview I got my first job right out of college in 1958. I started at Pinevale High School in Valdosta under Professor C. C. Hall. I spent 30 years there in the classroom, from 1958 to 1988, and enjoyed every minute of it. I did not have any problems with the students. My stay in the classroom was a pleasant one.

Trustees were the upstanding men in the community, perhaps preachers, or businessmen, or farmers, or landowners or something. They determined whether there was a need for a teacher in a school system based on the principal's wanting to recommend certain individuals for hire. Also, they would make recommendations to the principal and to the superintendent as to whether a teacher would get a contract or retain a contract, or whether teachers would be relieved of their position. Trustees ah…would sometimes play favoritism [he laughs a bit]. Trustees did have power.

Trustees would rely heavily on the principals' recommendation; yet, they had an agenda of their own. They influenced and guarded standards that Black teachers had to live up to in the community. They would keep records on whether these teachers would actually attend church and ah…based on how well teachers

measured up to established criteria. Also, any kind of moral problems a teacher may have had, trustees would consider if there were grounds to dismiss that teacher. They were very strict and they were very powerful. Trustees functioned as the board of education for Black schools in many school systems in rural Georgia. White superintendents would rely on the recommendation from the principal and trustees as to whom they would accept for a teaching position or whom they would reject. Many times as happened they would ah…get people in [hire or recommend for hire] that were favorable to one or two of the board members [trustee board].

I worked under a Jeanes supervisor but in my area [Industrial Arts Area] they weren't very effective. Being in the area I was in, I didn't have any personal experience with them. They didn't concern themselves with the Industrial Arts area. They concerned themselves with other academic areas, but I know they existed. The only lady that had a car in our town was a Jeanes supervisor. It seemed that their role was to stand between the school and the superintendent and answer to the state. They couldn't come in a school and supervise the school. They could just observe the actions of the school. However, Jeanes supervisors couldn't go into the superintendent's office and tell him what to do. They would observe his actions and then they could report to the state about what was going on, that's the way I conceived them.

I feel that based on their knowledge, Black teachers that taught in all Black segregated schools did a very good job. Based on their resources they did an

excellent job. I saw a Bunsen burner [a small science laboratory vertical metal tube burner used to produce a hot fame to heat liquids or solids] twice when I was a student. We had two in our biology laboratory so I happened to know what it was when I went to college. I was able to relate to what that Bunsen burner did because I was somewhat familiar with Bunsen burners, having used a burner similar to that in our plumbing work when we had to heat lead and various metal pipes. Also, I learned what a test tube was.

Black teachers were very nurturing and caring. They were like our parents away from home. If students needed something and they [the teachers] had it then students got it. Oh yes, clothes, shoes, etcetera, if you were in need and you went to a teacher, that teacher would do what he or she could to help you.

I was a victim of wanting to be a dropout in the eighth grade, I wanted to dropout because my family was very-very poor and we didn't have the resources we needed. My father was just getting into the plumbing business at that time and the clothes I had ah…were very old and torn up. They were clean but they had holes in them and other students would pick at me, so I wanted to drop out of school. However, my teacher kept talking to me and encouraging me to come to school. Eventually, my mother went to my teacher and she and the teacher made a deal. I could do basic mathematics fairly well because I got the background for it in fourth grade but in seventh grade I was ashamed to go to the board to do a problem because the children would laugh at my holey clothes.

I was determined to dropout of school at age 13 and go to Miami [Florida] and live there with my uncle. As time went on I would just sit there when the teacher called on me and I wouldn't respond, so I was really failing eighth grade and my mother knew it. After a while she and the teacher got together and made a deal that if I finished eighth grade my mother would buy me a wristwatch. So, I ah…I tried very hard the last two months to do better, but it wasn't to be. I did not have enough to actually do better but the teacher had mercy on me. At the end of the school year senior graduation was always held a day before the other students got out of school. Our graduation was held at night in a local church. During graduation, they called out all the names of students that got presents and I was really surprised when they called my name. And sure enough there was that watch. "A little eighth grade boy getting his name called out and receiving a watch from his mother." The next morning I went to pick up my report card and I remember it clearly because I had on my usual old overall pants. The teacher was 19 years old, her name was Miss. Gwendolyn Cox, and she was from Chattanooga, Tennessee. She had written on my card, "Promoted to the ninth grade on condition." Well, I didn't look at the card when she gave it to me. I just took it and shoved it into my back pocket because I knew I had failed the eighth grade. And that was all I needed for an excuse not to go back to school. So, I shoved it in my back pocket and I started out, then she called me and said, "You're not going to look at your card?" Then I decided to look at it and that's when I found she had written on it,

"Promoted to ninth grade on condition." So I just strutted on out the room and didn't say anything to her.

All I knew about algebra from high school was the principal came into our classroom one day and he was demonstrating something, I remember the word "algebra." I remember he said, "the quantity '*a*' plus '*b*' equal the quantity '*ab*'" [Since this is not true in general, perhaps the principal gave some other formula but this is how Mr. Isom remembers what was said], and that's all I knew about algebra when I got to college. But I was able to bridge the gap with the help of many students that had previously taken algebra. I found that in some school systems like the Macon and the Bibb County Systems, the Fulton County System, and the Chatham County System algebra had been taught to the students. In college I was in a class with several students from those school systems and I didn't know anything but, "the quantity '*a*' plus '*b*' equals '*ab*'." I had to rely on them to teach me algebra, and that was shocking to me because I thought all Black schools were on the same level but I found out that was not the case.

But the Lord would have it in 1966, after I had been teaching in the Valdosta School System for about eight or nine years and while I was attending a workshop at Savannah State College, I became very good friends with a man I met who was from Fulton County. He told me at the end of the workshop that he wanted me to meet his wife and children. The workshop ended on a Friday morning and we were all getting ready to return home when his wife showed up,

and low and behold it was my eighth grade teacher [Miss. Gwendolyn Cox]! And when she got out of the car she said curiously, "I know that man there." I didn't remember her, but the second time she said, "I know that man there." I realized who she was and I just ran to her and grabbed her and hugged her, and thanked her. Her husband was startled and amazed at me, and then I had to explain to him that she was my eighth grade teacher. [laughing hardily as he speaks he recalls] she said, "Oh, you didn't have to tell him that I been teaching that long." Then I said to him, "She saved me in education because I was destined to drop out of school if I had failed eighth grade."

But what I did not know is that my mother wanted me to at least finish eighth grade because back then you could teach school after having finished eighth grade. In Black schools they would allow you to teach in elementary school after finishing the eighth grade. That's what my mother really wanted; she wanted me to be a teacher. She never said it to me but as I grew older, maybe even after I started working here in Valdosta, I realized her intentions were for me to become a teacher. She [his mother] along with several of my teachers had a great influence on me becoming a teacher. I always loved school and I received an award for excellent attendance when I graduated from Appling County Training School in 1952.

In the Black community people thought very highly of teachers. They were highly respected in the community and they [teachers] were doing things for

children that their [parents] couldn't do for them or for themselves, and that was very good.

My first job as a teacher was at Pinevale High School in Valdosta. I started teaching there in 1958 and we were very much segregated by race then. It was a very good experience for me because I always wanted to help people. In fact, my whole life's desire was to help people and leave that as my legacy. I found that out at an early age in teaching. I guess I was in my third or fourth year teaching when I had a student that did not grasp what I was teaching. I gave a test and he did very poorly on it. As I verbally reprimanded him very heavily because he performed so poorly on the test he went into tears. I was really laying it on him. But when he went into tears I let up and let him go. Then I almost went into tears because at that moment I recalled the time when I was taking a graduate course at Florida A & M University and one of the philosophers of education said to me, "If a student doesn't learn, then the teacher hasn't taught." It suddenly entered my mind that when I find a person or student that didn't grasp the information then that's the opportune time for me to teach. It was time for me to redo the job and from that time on, 27 years later, I made certain my students understood at the time I taught. I couldn't do anything about their retention, but I made sure I did a thorough job in teaching because I wanted them to understand what I was doing. I nurtured many children over the next 27 years I taught school.

Well, now the culture has changed for our children. In 1966, I distinctly remember they came out with a term, "Do your own thing," and from that time on we had a complete revolution with children being disrespectful and not being concerned about what they were doing. They figured doing their own thing would not include anything that would be difficult or challenging to them. So, they wouldn't concern themselves about what was going on or what was being taught to them by adults.

White teachers definitely did not improve education for Black students. There were excellent teachers among both races and some not so good. Integrating the schools placed Blacks in a position to be exposed to better resources but it did not necessarily provide better teacher for Blacks. Most Black teachers could hold their own with teachers from any other race or ethnic group. Black teachers were and I dare say, they still are very good teachers and educators.

For the most part, I do not think that the administrators in the Valdosta City School System treated Black teachers and Black students any differently than they treated Whites after integration. There was an occasional differentiation in treatment. I know ah…in many instances Black administrators were cautious as to how they would discipline or how they would treat White students because there could have been some negative repercussions or misunderstandings when it came to fairly administering the rules as they were written. After schools desegregated, disciplinary rules were inconsistently applied to Black and White students. Rules

were applied more harshly toward Black students. After schools integrated some behavior and circumstances that led to applying disciplinary rules were changed or probably not adhered to as much as they were in the old Black schools. This was because both Black and White school administrators were fearful of upsetting parents and community leaders. They were also concerned about students staying in school and getting an education rather than being expelled or moved to another school by their parents.

Well, we had a White kid [meaning White children in general] that didn't even care about education because whether he graduated from high school or whether he graduated from college, he already had a job waiting on him in his father's office or in his father's company or in his friend's father's company, or somewhere in the White community, wherein the Black student didn't have that opportunity. White children and Whites in general have always been able to get work.

I found it true that many White students really didn't have to become educated. They were going to be given employment anyway. Regardless of whether they finished high school or college, or what have you, they could be a dropout and you would see them six years later in the sheriff's department, or on the police force, or behind a desk, or somewhere operating their father's business. They were going to make it regardless. When they [White students] were given an

assignment they would do it out of respect for the teacher rather than as a learning exercise for themselves. They really didn't have to learn and they knew it.

I definitely feel that in integrated schools Black students were more policed than White students. I have had many cases that support my belief. Before school integration; when I had yard duty during the lunch hour and found a disturbance going on between Black students, I could go to them and speak to them, and resolve the problem they had.

After school integration we had a no-fighting rule on campus and if a fight or disturbance erupted involving a Black student or Black students they would call the police and arrest the [Black] student or students for fighting on campus, even when we had resolved the problem and the students involved were no longer fighting. Another very common incident I found might involve school administrators and an angry Black student who would be taken into an office with a group of four or five other White people [White teachers and other administrators], the student is mad and naturally he is going to fight his way out of that situation and therefore, he is going to be arrested. On the other hand, I'm not sure White students would be arrested because they would be among their own kind and probably the authorities [police officer] knew their parents as friends and would probably call them. When they tried to call Black parents, most times they were working on a job for some White person and they couldn't get off to come and see about their children. But White parents usually owned jobs and could get

off anytime and come and see about their children. By observing actions such as these I found that there was a vast difference in the way children were being treated.

I witnessed some overt cases of racism after school integration. These were very sensitive times! But I saw how they handled punishment after we integrated the faculty; I saw punishment administered differently to Black students than to White students. When we were allowed to administer corporal punishment, I noticed White teachers would get four or five other White teachers to come and stand around and observe the punishment they were administering to a Black student. However, I did not notice a difference in who could punish students. Blacks were allowed to spank White children too. What I did notice was Black students would wind up getting suspended more often than White students because when a teacher has a crowd looking at what is being done, that teacher sometimes tends to exhibit greater sternness or become excessively forceful in order to prove their authority or show their peers that they are in charge. Many times Black students would feel abused or very insulted because a White teacher would have three or four of his or her friends observing them receiving punishment. Those teachers looking on may not have said anything but just by looking tended to egg the teacher on to do more than he or she normally would have done had there not been an audience, and then the student being punished acts like a cat in a corner. If you get a cat and put him up against a wall and surround him so that he has no

way out, he's going to fight his way out. Many times Black students were put in that type of situation and this is what caused a lot of Black students to get suspended. They resisted the harsh and inaccurate punishment [punishment that was inappropriate or inconsistent with a rules infraction] they were receiving. They would fight their way out and walk away or something, and then they would surely get suspended.

Even today, I bet you can count on one hand the number of Black teachers that become star teachers. We have never had a Black "Miss Valdosta High" that I know anything about and you will never have a Black as "Miss Valdosta High School." They do it differently now. They have a "Miss Valdosta Home Coming Queen." That's designated for Blacks and "Miss Valdosta High" is always a White person. Yet the population of Valdosta High School is predominately Black. Now, this is in the Valdosta City School System.

Now, we are at the point where new schools are strategically located geographically so that they will be either predominately White or predominately Black. New schools are being built so that they will be community schools and we know how our communities are [generally, communities are segregated by race]. Residential communities in Valdosta, Georgia are still very much segregated. There is an elementary school about ten miles from here, they built it way out in North Lowndes County, and you have to know the area to find the school [laughs loudly]. That school will be 100 percent White unless a lot of bussing takes place

and I don't think they are in a position to do that now. They have the busses but they don't want to run them that way. They wanted to build a new junior high school way out on the North side but they didn't get a chance to do that.

In the integrated school where I taught, I found to some degree, White teachers stuck mostly to themselves and Black teachers stuck mostly to themselves. When we were in the segregated school system Black teachers always had a comradeship with each other, but when schools integrated they spread us out so thinly that we hardly had any other Blacks to talk to, and we felt badly about that. We felt very badly about it because we used to have a very good comradeship in the mornings before school started, but integration broke that up.

It was a positive challenge everyday for me to go and meet my students and I enjoyed it, I really did. "I felt like I was a professional when I was teaching. I think this is true in general" I am sincere when I tell people, "I never had a bad day in the classroom." I never did. I nurtured and I taught students for 30 years. What I wanted to do was help them. That's the way it was ingrained in me to be able to help others. I would tell Black students in my class how to treat Whites. I said, "I don't want a one of you to ever mistreat one of these students [White students] in here because you don't have any reason to do so. I would say to them, "now, things were very different when I came up…I could be very mean and nasty to them because I have a reason, not particularly against them but through their parents." I said, "But I don't have any grudges, I just thank God that I am able to

be here to see the changes." I said, "I am not going to allow any ah…wrong doings toward any of these [White] students. By the same token, I am not going to allow you to treat each other wrong. Especially, I'm not going to tolerate any kind of mistreatment from Whites toward any of you…because when I came up it was definitely there…and it was the law of the land, but it is not law now."

I have a philosophy that at about three months old you have to ingrain in a child three things; dignity, competency, and education. What I mean is you must start training them early and keep it focused. When I was a boy we got that kind of nurturing, not only at home but also in the classroom. I fear because of integration we don't get that anymore in the classroom. I used to tell people, "I don't teach a subject, I teach the student," this came from a philosopher. Wherever I find him or her, I teach them there and whatever it takes for them to achieve learning and become competent, and have dignity, and value education, then I incorporate it in my teaching presentation. That is why I have gotten so many accolades over the years from former students I see. What I admire most is they are always smiling because I always had something funny to tell them. When they would cut a board too short in my class. I would razz [tease] them a little bit for making a cutting error while sawing boards and then I would tell them, "That's alright we can fix it. Go in back and find the board stretcher and we'll stretch the board to the desired length," and the student would go looking for it. [he laughs hardily as he states] Of course, there is no such thing as a board stretcher.

Finally, I would like to say, "I have great aspirations and admirations for this school system [the Valdosta City School System]. Ah…I think it's much better than a lot of school systems. However, there is plenty of room for improvement. We still have a long way to go to make things right." I will say this, "When some African American teachers and other members of the African American community add up the cost of school desegregation, the overriding questions is whether or not it was worth it?"

As I departed Mr. Isom's home after our second meeting in late March 2002, I reflected on his extreme patient manner of movement and speech. He appeared to be a man that could never get angry or upset about anything. I could not help but reflect on how neatly arranged were the furnishings and other interior items within his home. I reflected about how during each visit I found him very well dressed in shirt and tie, even on a weekday. Though he is retired now, he still gets up early each day and dresses well, then moves patiently about his business.

Portrait

Delores Jones Haines

Allow me to introduce Mrs. Delores Haines. Mrs. Haines is very short in stature, barely five foot tall, very petite, very beautiful, and she has an adorable personality. She is a gracious lady with beautiful silver hair that stops just above her shoulders and complements her beautiful pecan brown skin complexion. When she speaks, her words flow slowly and with an even tone.

Before I interviewed Mrs. Haines, I visited with her at Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church where she is a member and directress of one of the senior choirs. There I had the opportunity to observe her direct the large choir with fluid-like graceful continuous motion. When I interviewed Mrs. Haines in her home a few days later, I discovered that the same gracefulness and even-tempered continuity with which she directs the large church choir also characterizes her personality. During the interview, she showed me a collection of plaques and certificates that were awarded to her for different educational events and accomplishments during her tenure as a public school teacher. Mrs. Haines also has many plaques and certificates that she received over the years for excellence in teaching. Mrs. Haines was a consummate elementary school teacher who guided and educated

young Black and White children in Georgia for 37 years before she retired in 1987.

My full name is Delores Jones Haines. Well, I was the only child that my mother and father had. I was born here in Dougherty County but we moved to ah…Florida when I was very young and that's where I grew up, in St. Augustine, Florida. My father's name was Bobby Jones and my mother's name was Mable Jones. My father was a railroad worker and of course he was killed in an accident the year I turned six years old. He was working for a railroad company and was killed when he fell while working on an elevator.

My mother was a cook. My grandmother was one of these early teachers; she taught during the mid 1880s. Back then you could teach without having a college degree. My grandmother finished high school, however, she did not have a college degree. The high school she attended only went as far as the eighth grade. I know she finished the eighth grade. So anyway, after then she encouraged me to become a teacher. Her name was Mrs. Nella Irving, and of course, I stayed with my grandmother because my mother had to work after my father was killed. So anyway, I called my grandmother momma and I called my mother "mother dear."

Momma encouraged me to become a teacher and after I finished high school I started college. I finished high school at Excelsior High School in St. Augustine, Florida, in 1940, and I attended college at Florida Normal School, which they later named Florida Elementary College or something like that. I can't remember the exact name of the school after they changed it. It was in the St.

Augustine, Florida area. I completed the first two years in 1942, and then I went during the summer sessions only, and finished with the Bachelors degree in Elementary Education in 1945.

I finished four years there before I started to work, but then I married shortly after finishing and I came back home [Dougherty County Georgia] and started to work. I started working in Worth County. That was in 1940, or near that time, I can't really remember now. But I actually taught a total of 37 years in public schools in Georgia. I taught five years in Worth County and 32 years here in Dougherty County. That gave me 37 years. I retired in 1987. I've been retired now for 15 years. I worked at Sylvandale Elementary School on the East side and I retired from there in 1987, as a first grade teacher. So, those were the years I worked. Once upon a time you could work from one grade level to another. Of course, I have worked as high as the eighth grade but then after they became kind of you know, tight about that, you had to be either an elementary teacher or above. So, I chose the elementary grades because I loved little children.

I really enjoyed my career as a teacher. Yes I did, I really did. I taught before integration and continued on after desegregation. I started out teaching in all Black situations in elementary schools. Most of the children were poor, especially on the East side of Albany. There were a lot of parents that worked and then there were some that did not work. But anyway, most of them were poor and we as teachers helped the parents to provide and care for their children. I had four children of my own and I still carried [cared for] my school children. I used to take

a portion of the small amount of money that I earned and help buy clothing for some of the children who didn't have anything, especially for the children in my classroom. They were very, very, poor and when I bought things for them it kept them from coming to school, you know, looking too badly. I enjoyed teaching there and they seemed to have enjoyed me. In fact, during that time the parents were more [paused and changed thought]…respected teachers more.

Well, to me the way the parents reacted toward teachers showed they respected them very highly, more so than they do now. I didn't have any problems with my parents. Back then we had to do a lot of home visiting and that's how we found out what was going on in the homes. In helping students that way, a lot of times we didn't tell them what we were planning to do to help out, and the ones we helped were just so appreciative about how we helped them out.

Now, I think Black parents were always concerned about the education and welfare of their children. Some folk think we didn't care about our children and I don't know how they could think that. Yes, Black parents cared deeply about their children. There were a lot of times when they would have to pull them out of school so they could go into the fields and work, but we as teachers always cared and tried to compensate for any days they missed in school. One of my main objectives was to see that my students stayed in school as much as possible. And that was one reason I visited the homes as much as I did. Yes, we know Black parents were concerned about their children, but they had to work. And many times they [parents] would just have to pull those children out so they could work.

When I came along as a teacher there were not many options for us. So, we were usually good at teaching. Black teachers have always considered themselves professionals. I was a member of whatever organization they had as far as teachers were concerned. I would always become involved in them and other teachers were equally involved in teacher organizations too. Yes they were, most of them. The attitudes my teachers had toward teaching as a profession made me desire to express appreciation whole-heartedly for the training and unselfish cooperation I received during my learning period.

Educational improvements were encouraged during my tenure, workshops were held that were very beneficial for teachers. The concerns during my teaching years were: keeping the children in school, helping with their personal needs at school and at home, and working out the best projects or activities that would make for successful learning. I really feel that all children can learn…ah…if they are instilled with a desire and are approached the right way.

"I heard about Black schools not getting all of the materials and things White schools got. Yes, I heard about it and then a lot of materials that you did get were not new. So, that's how we knew whether or not we had gotten things that were passed down. But in my case, I would visit local stores and ah…buy materials. Before we started having these machines where we could run off our papers…I used to buy things for school just like I would buy things for my home. We bought bread pans and we would buy the jelly that we could warm and put in that pan and let it cool off, and then we would write out material for the children,

and run it off. That's how we duplicated papers until we got the Xerox machines many years later. This was normal for Black teachers in the Black schools. We provided the resources right out of our own pocket, that's what you had to do.

Then there were times when we didn't have bulletin boards in the classrooms. I have bought window shades and made pictures on them and used the shades to write lessons on. I would teach from what was on the window shades, and when a particular lesson was over, I would fix the shades on some kind of platform so that I could let each one of them up as needed and then any particular shade would not be in the way of the next lesson [each lesson was placed on a separate window shade] that the children would have."

So I think we came through a lot… "I was proud of myself. It always seemed as if at the end of each school year I would have had a good class. And I would tell parents when we'd have our little PTA [Parent Teacher Association] meetings. When they would come…I would tell my parents how the children were progressing…you see, once upon a time the children just came to school, they didn't go to kindergarten because we didn't have kindergarten. Back then we started with them where they were when they came to school and some of them didn't know how to hold a pencil, but we enjoyed working with them, I did. I would always talk with my children when I'd get them in my classroom. I called them my children and I would let them know that they were the best class in the school building. I would say to them, 'see you're the smartest, so you have to do good work,' and I didn't have any problems with them."

Now we had PTA [Parent Teacher Association] in our school and many Black parents would always come, however, there were some of them, but only a few, that wouldn't attend the meetings. That really shows that Black parents were indeed concerned about their children, to the extent that they could.

I also worked with Jeanes supervisors. They had to visit each school. One Jeanes supervisor, a Black lady, would come in and visit my class quite often. She would come in and sit in the classroom to listen and notice what I was doing. But that never bothered me…because I quickly became accustom to working with my children and whatever I was doing when the Jeanes supervisor came in, I never stopped. I kept right on ah…because whatever I was teaching at that particular time, I felt that was what the child needed and I didn't stop because someone came in. I really think Jeanes supervisors were there to help us. Well, now we have had some that were willing to help and there were others that felt because, "I am the Jeanes teacher, I'm just going to observe to see if you are doing what you should be doing." Jeanes teachers were mostly Black ladies. I never saw any White ones but I heard there were a few.

Now, we were encouraged to take classes in the summer when we could. In fact, some principals and superintendents I worked under were very concerned about teachers and often encouraged us to take classes. I took several classes from Georgia Southwestern College in Americus, Georgia, during the time I was teaching. Anyway, they really encouraged us to continue our education but I never

completed the Master's Degree, however, I started and I did some work towards my master's.

Well, during segregation a good relationship existed between Black teachers, the students, and the parents so to speak, the teachers could tell the students what they wanted done or how they wanted them to react or what they wanted them to learn. We talked to the children and then we also notified the parents, that's why we made home visitations. It appeared that parents would help their children more with their work after we made home visitations.

"But when we became integrated it was somewhat different. We could visit our parents [Black parents] you know, but we didn't go to visit the other [White parents] parents' homes. Yet, I would let them know what I expected and what I wanted done. I taught both Black and White children. At first, Sylvandale was a predominately White elementary school and they integrated it around 1972 or 1973. When we were first ah…integrated they started with the teachers; the White children were already there since it was already a White school. So, they brought over Black teachers. I believe they brought over about six or seven of us. Black students came over the next year after the faculty had been integrated. We didn't experience any incidences of racism from the teachers. The teachers were very nice because we had a White principal there…a White lady, and she was not that kind. She didn't believe in that [mistreatment because of one's race]. They had to treat us right. They may not have wanted to but they had to."

We were told that one time in Dougherty County Black teachers didn't get paid the same as White teachers, even if they had the same credentials and years of experience. "Now, we were told this. I can't verify any of this because I didn't see any proof of it, but we were told White teachers were paid more than we were. It was common knowledge circulating among Black teachers, however, I never heard any White teacher say that. If it was done, and I don't say it wasn't, they knew how to keep it a secret, you know [laughing as she speaks]."

I really don't know if White teachers taught Black students differently than they did White students. But you see, White teachers have… ah, asked me about various teaching techniques and they got a lot of information from me about how to teach Black children. I was asked for ideas and things of that sort by some of the Whites to see how they could get information over to Black students, and of course they used many of the techniques and ideas I suggested for both colors in the classroom. I provided classroom and library experiences, informal reading matters or materials, experience charts, phonetic analysis, and math word problems, etc.

I certainly would not say that White teachers were necessarily better teachers than Black teachers. I say that because we had excellent Black teachers too…now, I have to say this, and if a dozen Whites were standing or sitting here I would say the same thing. Those that know me know I was like that. I will tell the truth and say what must be said. "They weren't better, no. We had some good White teachers and then there were some that were just making a salary. This was

true for some Black teachers too." I am going to tell it like it was and probably still is.

"When I found out that we were going to have to integrate I just made up my mind that I was going to do just like I had been doing and if I could improve, I would improve, and I did. And as long as I worked…it looks like each year that I worked, I improved more. Good teaching became a regular thing for me to do, as far as I was concerned, and I would use many different teaching methods. In other words school integration didn't get me bent all out of shape. It [teaching] was something that I had to do and I enjoyed it."

White schools were not really better than Black schools as far as excellent teaching is concerned. Now I will say, "they had more materials. They had a whole lot more materials than we had in segregated Black schools. I certainly would not say that White teachers were necessarily better teachers than Black teachers. And ah…once we got in those White schools, then we had access to those materials. So to me, I felt having the materials I needed helped me to become even better. But ah…as far as pure teaching ability is concerned, no, their schools were not better. We could hold our own. Integration helped us by allowing us to get in an environment where we had the resources that others [Whites] had…better resources than we had in our [Black] schools during segregation."

One experience that sticks out in my mind is that they began to identify children and groups that were not quite alert [slow learners], both Black and White children, and of course they set up special classes or other places where they

would go and be taught. They would leave school and be gone for a certain length of time, and then they would have to come back to school. I had several of those types of students and mainly the White ones were in my classroom. But ah…I had a way of working it out and helping those students learn [smiling]. I was very determined that they were going to get a certain amount of learning just as the other [regular] children whether they were slow learners or not.

Anyway, I had several classes of slow students and I noticed something about my last principal at Sylvandale [a White male principal], he would pay close attention to the slow learners. When those slow learners would come there, even though they might have been in another teacher's class initially; if they were too hard for the other teachers to handle he would come and talk with me concerning having those children transferred into my classroom. These were Black and White children. I had more Whites like that than I did Blacks. Anyway, I got along fine with all of them and after a while our relationship progressed to where they were just so crazy about [students were quite fond of Mrs. Haines] "Mrs. Haines." They just believed that if "Mrs. Haines" said it then it should be done, you know. I got along fine with them, and I didn't have any problems. But see, once upon a time they had to be taught right in the classroom; they didn't have any special places to go to learn. However, I knew they could learn in my classroom.

So, I don't believe that White teachers alone, improved education for Black children. Again as I said earlier, from the Black school period [the period when Blacks attended segregated Black schools], we had so many doctors, lawyers, and

other professionals that did not attend White schools, especially during their elementary years. So, I feel that if they [Black teachers] could do it then, they would have done it even if schools had been integrated all along.

Discipline changed when we integrated schools, the reason I say that is because when I first started teaching we had a way of disciplining the children that we didn't have after integration. They were so afraid that Black teachers would paddle White children and they didn't want that. But we got along just as well, because as far as I was concerned, if they couldn't do what I said, I'd let them understand…I'd let their parents understand what I required at the beginning of the school year. And if they couldn't do as I asked I would put them out of my classroom, any student. They had to have good discipline in my classroom. If they were in my room they had to do right. Yes, students were taught class rules and parents were aware of the discipline plan, which was used to promote the excellent learning climate they deserved.

Race really didn't impact students' promotion as I saw it. I think the integration process was done pretty much the right way. There might have been two or three that slipped through the cracks to satisfy some parent but I don't believe it was too many. Really, Black teachers had to meet the same standards when teaching Black children as they did when they taught White children. "I was trained to teach students of all colors. As a public school teacher I was noted as one of the best. I worked with individuals…different students."

"I am very happy that I was an elementary school teacher. I am happy that I was able to serve until I reached retirement. I feel I made a contribution that really helped many students reach their potential. I hope I represented a compilation of some of the best teaching practices used in elementary school."

I was very impressed by Mrs. Haines accolades displayed in her home and the ones that she brought out from a storage box that was located in a back room of her home—those she had placed in a box because she no room left on the living room walls to display anymore. I will long remember her gracefulness and soft-spoken clear voice. I can imagine that her students must have loved her.

Manurver, so when I was born they named me after my aunt but they changed Manurver to Marrone. There are five Annie M. Slacks in my family.

My father was born Milton Oliver Slack, Jr. He was born in Henry County, near Forsyth, Georgia, which is just South of Atlanta. I lived for a short time in Henry County; however, I was born in Rome, Georgia.

My father went beyond high school. At that time they called it trade school. I don't know the name of the trade school he attended but it was somewhere in Henry County, or in Atlanta. He was one of the original singers with the Wings Over Jordan Singers, which was a very famous gospel-singing group. They were a gospel group that used to be on the radio on Sunday mornings many, many years ago, and you know how Blacks love to listen to gospel singing. My father was the first tenor in that group and he sang in the Big Bethel A. M. E. Choir, where his family held membership. I guess I can say my father was an entrepreneur. He could butcher cattle, he built cabinets, he built homes, and he had his own little business where he hired people to help with various jobs he managed. He was very talented and he was very interested in education. He steered his children in the right direction. There were eight of us and I'm in the middle, and I'm the shortest one.

He took an interest in our schooling and he taught me to read. He taught me the Lord's Prayer. So, in my home I had a good father figure, a loving Christian father figure who cared about his children and their welfare, and he always told us, "be somebody," and that was way before Martin Luther King, Jr. When Martin

Luther King came along he said, "I am somebody." But my father taught us to "be somebody." So, I've always remembered that…yes he was there for us, and taught us the value of womanhood, which I value today. So I can say, "God just gave us a good father." We went to church on Sundays and it was routine for us to get up on Saturdays and prepare for Sunday by ironing our dresses and getting the other things ready that we needed for church.

My mother was born Alpha Gail Norris. She lost her parents at a very early age and she became an orphan. So, she lived with relatives until she was old enough to get married. She lived in Knoxville, Tennessee, with her brother. Later she lived in Chattanooga, and she lived in Atlanta with an uncle. For a time she lived with one relative who didn't value education so she went as far as the seventh grade. During those days Blacks were only given an eighth grade education. During the 1920s, in Georgia, Blacks finished high school after completing eighth grade but Whites went above the eighth grade. My father told me that his school went only as far as the eighth grade.

Blacks completed high school and their public education at that point. That was enough education for Blacks [pause] in those times because they were supposed to go into the field of servitude, or become a sharecropper or something like that. Whites felt Blacks only needed to have sense enough to "plant a seed, tend to crops, and that sort of stuff," [Blacks only needed enough training to be able to farm or perform simple manual labor] and answer, "yes sir or no sir" to White Folks. By allowing Blacks to finish high school after completing eighth

grade they would have a very limited education and they wouldn't have enough to advance beyond the White man. Whites went beyond eighth grade at that time so essentially they would have more education than Blacks. They would have more subject matter to deal with and they were trained to supervise, boss, and take care of Blacks [manage or oversee] when they [Blacks] became adult. Whites were expected to go into business fields and control the economy, and control Blacks and other races. That is what was happening at that time.

So, my mother went as far as the seventh grade and then she married my father in 1922. I think she said she was about 21 or 22 years old when she married. Eight of us were born from that union and my parents stayed together as a family for 29 years. Both are deceased now.

My mother had what Blacks called "mother wit" and she was a very strong lady. She was a Christian woman and she along with my father would teach us. My mother taught us one good lesson I never will forget. Children used to josh each other and riddle each other about their complexion. Anyway, the kids would call me names like, "ole yellow pumpkin" [she has a very light yellow complexion] or something like that. So, I would cry and run home and tell mom. One time as I ran in to tell mom about the kids calling me names and I recall she was ironing. Mom took in ironing…she ran a little laundry at home. She stopped ironing and asked why was I upset. I said, "Oh, because they called me this, that, and the other." She said, "I don't see why you are upset, I didn't name you yellow pumpkin, I named you Annie Marrone, when they call you names just turn around

and introduce yourself, tell them you are Annie Marrone Slack, and keep walking." [speaking with much emphasis] I never will forget that. I thought that was the best lesson I ever learned. I was a little kid then and that lesson followed me the rest of my days.

My mother used to do laundry and my father was an entrepreneur and sometimes we had to deliver clothes to Caucasian's homes. My father told us if we go to deliver clothes and they ask us to go to the back door, don't go. He said, "You don't have to come into the back door of your house," so just tell them, "My father told us not to enter anybody's back door." He was a fighter in that sense. So, when we went there and they asked us to go around back I'd say, "Well, my daddy doesn't want us to go in the back door because we don't have to go in the back door at home," and those Whites didn't exchange any more words with us.

Anyway, my father was a pusher, my mother also. They didn't want us to be common laborers; they wanted us to be better than they were. So, they valued education, they valued high school; we had to go to school and we had to go to church. They pushed us as far as we wanted to go, "If I can help you, then you go" [explaining her parents' attitude about education]. So, I finished Morris Brown College in 1953, my oldest sister attended Brooklyn College and she finished there in New York, and my oldest brother went to Claflin College in South Carolina. He didn't finish because the military pulled Blacks out of high school and during their freshman year of college and sent them off to serve in the military.

At that time Rome, Georgia was the seventh largest city in the state of Georgia. It was a semi-metropolitan area and we lived on the north side of town. Rome was divided into North, South, East, and West Rome. It was a little modernized moderate size city with a metro area and with busses for public transportation. It was very much segregated during the time I grew up there, absolutely 100 percent. At that time we paid a nickel to enter in the front of the bus and then we had to walk to the back, so now we understand that was about racism. This was in about 1935 or 1936, or a little later.

But I remember we were going to visit my aunt who lived in West Rome and to commute we caught the city bus transportation. We could ride the bus with Whites but we had to sit in the back of the bus as we entered and paid a nickel or what whatever the cost was, of course my father paid for us. We knew we were supposed to go all the way to the back of the bus. We even rode the bus to church on Sundays. We lived about three blocks from where the bus stopped. There was a White neighborhood about three blocks away from my house.

Nonetheless, we would walk three blocks to the White neighborhood and the bus would stop for us. We would get on the bus and put our money in and we knew to trail all the way to the back because that was the law, which no one agreed with…but it was the law. We were very segregated and it was very heart breaking too. We wondered why we had to do certain things because no one explained things to us. We thought that was the way the law of the land was supposed to be. It was a learned behavior from the White man that we had to do

this. It was a learned behavior. I think the reason Black people fell in those footsteps is because too many young Black people saw their fathers lynched, killed, castrated, brutalized, and all sorts of mean things done to them. So, I guess instead of being whipped and killed [incomplete sentence]...we decided to go along with the evil laws of segregation as long as we could. The fear Blacks possessed and the passiveness of Blacks to obey the law rather than being brutalized by mean spirited Whites caused us to endure segregation and racism. Anyway, it was ugly and it was wrong.

One good thing being done now that I really like is the military is giving honorary diplomas to those students whose careers or education was interrupted by the military from their high schools or wherever they attended...ah...they are doing that this year. Anyway, my father valued education and we went out and did what we had to do, and most of us have been successful. I became a teacher.

So, that's the gist of coming up segregated, Black, and poor. Nonetheless, if it had not been for the backbone of our parents and our teachers we would not have made it. We advanced and we became top citizens that other people respect and look up to. We became example setters for other people.

So, I grew up in Rome, Georgia, attending totally segregated Black schools. During that time they [Whites that were in power] didn't build enough schools for Blacks, so in the first grade we had double sessions. At that time we had a little two-room school building. Of course that was the first and second grade. We had two first grade sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, and two

second grade sessions, one morning and one afternoon. We had another building for third through seventh grade and they had double sessions as well. The high school carried eighth through eleventh grade. I finished high school after the eleventh grade. But eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh were equivalent to four years of high school because at that time they counted eighth grade as a high school term. School segregation was at the root [the real problem] of this whole design for schooling of Black children, and White children as well. The greatest problem for public schools in Georgia has been the school integration and segregation issue.

My cousin taught me when I was in first grade and I have another cousin that taught me when I was in fifth grade, they had college degrees. I think the one that taught me in first grade attended Savannah State College but I don't know where my cousin that taught me in fifth grade attended college. I know both of them went to college. I don't know if it was four years or two years.

At my school, we had a building called the primmer [the primmer was a pre-first grade term]. All the schools were on one campus. The primmer was taught in a little red building that also housed first and second grades. A two-story brick building housed third through seventh grades. The high school housed eighth through eleventh grades. These were all Black classes holding double sessions because the school system did not make provisions to build enough Black schools to provide Black students with adequate educational facilities. These schools were in session each year holding nine-month double sessions.

People looked at Black teachers as role models. Teachers in those days had to be good citizens, outstanding Christians who attended church regularly, and when we recognized a teacher, or a preacher, or an insurance agent, those were our idols and we knew we wanted to be like them. Those were the professions Blacks could have and we considered them to be great professions. We would say, "Oh, when I finish I am going to be a teacher, because that's as far as this state wants me to go." They don't want me to be a secretary or a representative or a politician, but if I'm Black, "I can be a teacher and I can be an insurance agent." Those were high jobs for us other than being a servant in someone's [a White person's home] home. Black teachers were very well respected in the community. Oh, they were at the high echelon of professionalism. Throughout the Black community you could hear comments such as, "She is a great person because she is a teacher. She teaches school and I want to be like that when I grow up. I want to be like my teacher when I grow up." Teachers, absolutely 100 percent, impressed me because ah…those Black teachers were dedicated. I can remember the teachers I had through college, they were dedicated, and they were there for students. If you were lagging behind they would get on your case just like your parents would. You walked the straight and narrow, you had to do what you had to do, and you did it.

They cared about your welfare and your character, and often they expressed thoughts about citizenship, and they discussed our future. Then they taught us little parables, "A penny saved is a penny earned," those sort of things. They taught little things with a little mother wit in them. So, I can say that a surrogate mother

was prevalent in those Black teachers because they were absolutely concerned about our welfare and I'm sure they were looking after our future, and what we could be or how far we could go. They instilled in us the value of education and that is why we were there.

I don't think we had very many home visitations except in the case of one or two wayward students but nonetheless our teachers would come and get family information. I remember my mother taking me to school for registration but if there was a need for the teacher to come and get more information…they would sometimes come to the home and visit. But I guess it wasn't a regular thing because they had to get around to visit the whole community. I do remember a teacher coming to visit our home once in a while but not often. We lived in a neighborhood where some of the teachers that taught us lived so they didn't have to visit because we were next-door neighbors. I remember we would say," Oh, my teacher is coming and my house has to be clean." We would clean up and get out the special things because we wanted to impress our teacher. So, that alone showed that they were well-respected and upstanding citizens in the community.

There were several schools for Caucasian children in Rome. They had a school in West Rome, they had a school in South Rome, and they had an East Rome High School for Whites. The school for Black children was officially called Rome Colored High School. That was the official name until they named it Main High School. The reason they named it Main High School was because that was the only high school in Rome Georgia for Black students. Thinking back now, this

was in the 30s and early 40s. City busses were used to bus Black students from the West, the South, and the East to the only Black high school in Rome, which was in North Rome. They didn't have school busses at that time. At that time busses transported Black students to achieve segregation. Bussing students has been around a long time, even back then. They were bussing kids then to maintain segregation and they were using the city bus system to do it, and nobody rode on those busses but Black kids…so they could go to segregated schools. White children in Rome were not being bussed at that time. They lived in back [near] of the schools in their communities. Well, I'm not familiar with the rural schools. I know there was a school in a section of Rome called Lyndale but I don't know whether we had county schools or not. I think the school in Lyndale was for rural kids. I don't remember the grade levels that were taught in the school at Lyndale but I remember some of those students from that area were bussed to North Rome Colored High School. Lyndale had their own busses so they provided bussing for Black kids from that area who needed to come to Rome.

The schools [Black schools]… were very inferior in terms of resources, we didn't have many of the supplies and things we needed. Yet, our teachers insisted on teaching us ah…home economics instead of secretarial science because they thought we would only work in the homes of Whites. I don't know, I've heard that some Black principals were asked if they wanted typing for students in their schools and they said, "No, they'll never be a secretary." They said, "Teach them home-economics because they'll just be cleaning up White folk's homes. Teach

them how to clean up." So we were being educated in quote unquote the "Negro way," which was education that was set-aside for the Negro to grasp so that he could be a better servant. You see, in homemaking they taught us how to set a table, how to cook, how to sew, how to cleanup, how to do the sort of things related to cleaning, and how to prepare a meal, and serve it with the napkins appropriately placed, you know. We were taught how to layout and put a center piece properly on a table. These were the things taught to Blacks so that when they finished high school, they could serve Caucasians. These were the things we could look forward to as a career. That [cleaning and housekeeping] was the only profession for young Black girls.

We had used books in our school and we were asked to put covers on these books even though these books came marked up by White kids. We had used desks with carvings of White kids with such scribbling as, "D. J. loves M. S." They had also drawn little hearts on the desks we got from them and then our teachers would asked us not to write on the desks…already written on and not to write in those dirty books that were already written in, and already torn up. Our teachers told us to cover those dirty books. I remember, a few times we got a few new books because they had ordered too many for the White school, or they no longer used those particular books.

Now, there was in some instances a small bit of class or social grouping among Blacks. In some instances, I did experience cases where if it were a poor child the kids would tease him or her because he or she was poor. Also, I believe

there was some sort of drawing a biased line between whether a person was poor and how that person would be treated. But kids were taught as a whole not to be that way. Yet, sometimes there was an atmosphere that a type of class system existed, even among Blacks.

When I went to college…if you were light [skin complexion] ah…you could be Miss Morris Brown College, you could be Miss Phi Beta Sigma, and so on. They chose girls with lighter skin complexion and put them up as queens of schools and colleges. They were favored because back then you didn't see the dark skin girls getting those roles as queens. So, there was a little Caste System just scarcely existing among some Black people. Of course, we had been brained-washed to think that Black features were not as beautiful as White features. They wanted a "pretty person," [person with White physical features] they didn't want a Black person up there. If you had short kinky hair and thick lips then … "you can't be a queen." And ah… "If you are light-skinned and you have shoulder length hair and you are nicely shaped and your lips are thin and pink…"That's what we want for our queen, we don't want any Black person sitting up there embarrassing us." So it's sad, [pausing] but that was the way it was.

Then there were the very, very, very poor kids who lived in "shotgun homes" [shotgun houses were little houses built especially for Blacks with small in-line rooms such that one could pass through every room when walking from the front door straight through the house to the back door] and who had to use pit toilets that were prevalent in those days. Many people didn't have a

bathroom…and if they did it was just a sink and a commode attached to the back porch. Most children had to take a bath behind the stove in the kitchen in a tin tub because they didn't have running water. These less than desirable conditions prevailed for most Blacks well after many amenities were available that improved living standards for White folks.

Most Black people raised a lot of their food to feed their families, such as chickens, hogs, and cows. Some Black children came to school in rags, and barefooted, and I noticed that some teachers bought shoes for children that needed them, and some teachers in the Homemaking Department would make clothes and give them to children in need, or they would get clothes from someone else and give them to needy families. These were teachers doing this; giving clothes to those children. So, they did have a keen eye and they did have compassion, whether you were poor or whether you were rich. But I noticed some children complaining that when some Black teachers got ready to have a play or a concert or other activity, they would overlook children considered as "poor kids." [Some Black teachers would surmise], "Oh, they can't afford to buy this or buy that," you know what I mean. I did not find that Black teachers in my high school favored lighter-skin Blacks over those that had darker complexions. What I experienced was if some children had lighter skin than others then the children would call each other names.

I went on to graduate from high school in 1949. My parents inspired me to go to college. My parents, my church, my teachers, and my principal, Mr. Acock,

inspired me. I had a very good support system that provided 100 percent support to me. When we were living in our little world, although we were poor and we were Black, we were happy in our little world. We had something to look forward to because we looked up to those adults who cared about us and who pushed us forward so we could be outstanding upright citizens and get in a profession so we could make it in the future. That caring attitude dwelled among Blacks then and I think it still exists today. I have noticed in recent generations that some beautiful Black girls have been given an opportunity to be queen and to be first at their school. And then too, they have begun to realize, "the color of your skin does not determine the content of your character." Though we are Black, we have talent too, and we can learn and we can perform. So, ah...it is very important that we have some beautiful Black girls who have gotten into these positions and have been queens and first attendants and what have you.

While I was in high school, I had a part-time job. I worked in a doctor's office in the afternoon. He was a Black doctor. We had six Black doctors and we had a Black hospital in Rome. We had a Black restaurant and a Black drug store also. We had a little business district section called "Five-Points," and that's where we had a cluster of Black businesses. My father had a barbershop on First Avenue in an area down town that was called the "Cotton Block." It was the area where all the cotton farmers would gather when they came to town on Saturdays. All the country people, both Blacks and Whites would accumulate in the Cotton Block

area downtown. My church, Saint Paul African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church was in the heart of downtown on Sixth Avenue.

When I graduated from high school, I was an excellent student in Chemistry and Biology. Those were my favorite subjects. I loved Chemistry, I loved Biology, and I loved Geometry. So, after leaving Rome Colored High, I went to Morris Brown College in Atlanta, Georgia. At first I wanted to be a nurse, but somehow I started taking what I thought was a premed preparatory course before medical school, thinking I might decide to become a medical doctor.

So, I headed for Morris Brown College and majored in Premed Biology and minored in Chemistry, and I took electives in education, art, and a few other subjects. My parents had asked me to take electives in education in case medicine didn't pan out, so I did. But nonetheless, when I graduated they didn't tell me the money was limited. Then later my parents said, "We can't send you to medical school and keep your sister and the others in school." So, after I graduated from Morris Brown College there was an opening at Emory University Hospital and I applied for the position. They were looking for a hematologist. I had taken a class in hematology at Morris Brown College. The course dealt with analyzing blood, making slides, and tissue graphs. I knew how to do work that dealt with hematology. I completed the application and I made 99 on the test. They told me that was the highest score they'd ever had and they wanted to know, "Where did you go to school? Mrs. Fisher I tell you, we'll call you." They haven't called me yet.

When I came to Valdosta in 1960, they were making Black teachers go to college because most of them had been teaching since high school or since they were about 18 years old. So, they had to go to college because there was a demand for teachers to be certified in the state of Georgia. That's why I came to Valdosta; they were searching for teachers who already had a baccalaureate degree.

The superintendent at Valdosta had threatened Black teachers saying, "Well, if you can't become certified to teach, I'll go to Atlanta and get some teachers." Nonetheless, I found out when they really started integrating teachers, most of them [White teachers] were out of their field and didn't have college degrees. But the superintendent and principals allowed them in the classroom; many of them were Fine Arts Majors and some of them had graduated from the University of Georgia, and said they didn't learn anything there because they were not taught. They said they just went to the classroom, got their assignment, without being taught by the professor, and then they would complete the assignment and turn it in. And when they graduated they had about 200 credits and no one learned anything. I heard a number of them say they didn't learn anything and they would never go back to the University of Georgia.

I worked with a third grade teacher [White teacher] at West Gordon Elementary School, and she did not know how to teach third grade mathematics. The reason I know this is because she told me. It was pathetic and sad. At West Gordon Elementary School we had non-graded rooms that were petitioned and I noticed that while I was teaching mathematics she would have her children to put

their heads down on the desk and be quiet. I wondered why, "What's going on?" The next day she would be wide open saying the same things I said the day before. And the next day the same thing would happen. So, one day she just told me she didn't know how to teach third grade mathematics. She said, "Mrs. Fisher, I listen to you and write my plans." She said, "I cannot teach third grade mathematics, I'm a Fine Arts major." If that had been a Black woman they would not have put her in a classroom to teach mathematics and she would have needed a college degree to even start. What is so amazing and so interesting about the whole thing is ah…the White teachers were no more prepared to teach school than Black teachers and most of them did not have a college degree. We had White teachers whose husbands were stationed at Moody Field Air Force Base and to give these military wives something to do ah…they put them in the classroom. Some of them did not have majors in education…[pausing briefly then speaking in a whisper] they were not certified teachers. They were first-year and second-year college students, or they had no college education but they were hired as teachers and paid more money than Black teachers who had college degrees.

Later, after they had to further integrate the schools in Valdosta I was transferred to Sallas Mahone Elementary School. It was an integrated school with about five Black teachers and 45 White teachers. Now, as to how the White teachers treated Black teachers…to put it in the right perspective; you got your "rednecks" everywhere. There were some that didn't like you whether you were a teacher or a student. [speaking mockingly, she emphasizes how she felt Whites felt

about Blacks] "If you are Black we just don't like you and I don't want to associate with any Black teachers, and I don't want to teach any Black students."

A White teacher not wanting to teach Black children was a common issue. There was a particular White teacher there who would "weed-out" the Black children in her room. She never had more than three Black students in her class. We were both third grade teachers and I always had about 26 Black students in my classroom. They simply didn't want to teach Black children. What we had was segregation within an integrated society [meaning segregated classrooms within integrated schools]. The principals went along with it, and then there were some White parents who didn't want Black teachers teaching their children. So, to tell the truth, that's exactly what went on. Some White teachers didn't want to associate with Blacks or relate to Blacks, as if we wanted them to. So, I didn't attempt to relate to them either. It wasn't because I was against them, rather because, "If you don't want to integrate with me, I'm not going to want to integrate with you, you're not doing me a favor."

I thought integration was right. I had been taught as a child that I'm just as good as anybody else and, "I am somebody." My father said, "Be 'somebody,' be a lady." My father had taught me I was a lady; I was "somebody" regardless of the pigmentation of my skin and I could rub shoulders with anybody, I don't care what color. You could be green, blue, yellow, or black because I could stand my ground and protect myself. I had that kind of attitude and I could face any stereotypical slang or word. I had something to dish back at you in a nice

professional way that wouldn't hurt anybody but let him or her know that I could care less about what they thought about me. I felt, "I am moving on. I have reached the pinnacles of where I want to be and I'm doing a heck of a job here. So what you are saying about me doesn't matter because here I am…I've had a master's degree since 1976 and here you are, you don't have one."

White teachers would run and tell the principal if they felt a Black teacher was not following rules. One day as I was teaching my students, I found that they didn't want to read that day. So, I decided I needed to be flexible; I had to be smart enough to use something else to achieve my objective. At the time, I was teaching both Black and White children. I had about two or three Whites and the rest were Black. I said, "Since you all don't want to read today, how many of you would like to be my little teacher helpers today?" Everybody wanted to help. So, I gave them another group's papers and said, "I want you to help me grade these papers." Actually, they had been graded already, so we just went over the mistakes. I used this strategy to get them to read. See, there are many ways to approach teaching Language Arts. So, they would read sentences and then I would ask them to make corrections where needed. They were getting reading and didn't realize it.

Anyway, a White teacher went up to the office and told the principal that I was teaching reading skills and not teaching reading. You see, "they put those little flunkies in there to run and tell him." He was White. He called me to his office and asked me, "Mrs. Fisher, do you know you don't teach reading skills during reading?" I said, "Well, how did you come about the idea that I'm teaching

reading skills?" He said he heard I was teaching reading skills and not doing the regular reading lessons. I asked if he could tell me who told him that, since he was not in the classroom. I told him I was not teaching skills. I told him about my students' attitudes that day and that they were up in the air and just didn't want to read that day. I said, "As you know my lesson plans are flexible." When students are not interested you always have something else to glean their interests. I said, "What I did was go over the language skills, which is reading, and there were mistakes in those papers the students had done and I used that strategy as a way of having reading without their knowledge. Language Arts is reading and Language Arts is spelling. I told the principal my students were correcting papers and they were so interested in being my little helpers, and so delighted reading and correcting sentences. They were at a happy medium and I got my reading done.

I didn't teach White children differently than I taught Black children. I look at a child as a child; I don't care what color his skin is. God gave us all a brain, our brains may not function the same but be ye Black or White we can all learn. The only non-reading student I ever had in my life was a White child. I never had a non-reading Black child to teach. I had some children that were slow learning how to read. But the little Caucasian boy I'm speaking of had reached third grade and couldn't read. They had passed him on and he couldn't read. But I taught that kid to read. That was the only non-reader I had. I pride myself in teaching children and I treat them all equal. There is no difference in children learning, kids learn alike even if their ability differs, unless they were born with some type of mental

impairment or something like that. There are brilliant Black children and brilliant White children. There are middle of the road Black children and middle of the road White children. There are low achieving Blacks and low achieving Whites, and the mentally retarded in both races. So, I look at a child's age level, their ability, what they can comprehend, and I teach a child as a child. We must teach the whole child regardless of looking at the color of his or her skin because that doesn't mean a thing. All children can learn.

I don't think White teachers I worked with were better than Black teachers. I say this with authority and with experience. When school integration began, I noticed White teachers would pull the White children around the desk and teach the White children and leave the Black children back by themselves. Black students were considered to be troublemakers and to label them as troublemakers meant they would be sent out into the halls unsupervised where they would talk. Naturally, students are going to talk if they are not being taught. So, a Black teacher discovered what was going on and informed the parents of the Black students. She told some parent to come and eavesdrop. So, a parent came and she watched and listened, and she documented what she saw and heard. Then another parent came and documented the teacher's actions, and then they told the principal what was going on.

We had the kind of principal that pretended he was for integration. He would look into this sort of thing whenever it was brought to his attention and he also followed up on this report and saw what was happening. Also, when one of

the parents went to the principal and told him what was going on. He asked her how she knew this, and she said, "My child came home and told me. Why are all of the Black children in the back and all the White kids around the teacher and she's teaching them? Why can't they teach my child?" The parent never exposed the Black teacher who told her. She said, "My child told me." So, the principal called the child into his office and asked the child about it. The child said, "The teacher does not teach us and she sends us out into the hall when we talk but she won't teach us in the classroom. The principal got rid of that teacher. That doesn't make them a better teacher. There are some good White teachers and some who are teaching just to supplement their husband's salaries so they can live at a certain high echelon level.

Then there are some teachers who are not certified and they don't know how to teach. They are Fine Arts majors; they don't have any business being in an elementary classroom teaching elementary children. They don't have the experience because a Fine Arts curriculum does not train students how to teach those grades. Also, a lot is influenced by ah… ah…friendship, "I want to teach school because I want to buy new things" or "because we want to go on a cruise, and I want my wife to come in and have a job." This kind of thing [favoritism] was going on within the schools, and then some of them were teaching because their husband's didn't have jobs; some of them were supporting their husbands. There are quite a few good White teachers. There are some who are interested in teaching and some who don't give a continental [don't care] whether students

learn or not, especially if the students are Black. White teachers have that racial segregation [racist] mentality that Blacks can't learn and therefore, ah… "I'm teaching you because I want the money."

The only thing I can say about what we may have gained from integration is, "I live in this city and I can go over there to that school if I want to…[pausing before she continues] because the law says so. Even if I don't want to go the law says I can go and since I can go there I'm going to take advantage of the opportunity. [speaking with great emphasis] I have the right to go to the best schools, and they put the best resources in the White schools." The state put all the curricula resources needed for providing quality education in the integrated schools. In fact, we had more than we needed in those integrated schools but when we were teaching in the segregated Black schools we had to buy most of the things we needed ourselves.

"I ought to receive an award for the school supplies that I had to buy out of my pocket to put into the classroom for little Black students to learn. Out of my low salary I received at that time, I bought books, pencils, teaching supplies; I bought oooh… oodles of things to put in my classroom because the Black principal would tell us they didn't have the money, or the superintendent didn't give him but so much, and he had to spread that little bit among all the teachers. Yet, other teachers [White teachers] on the other side of town were getting more materials than they needed. It was a trying time." I feel that I will be well blessed in life because I bought food to take to school for children who didn't have

breakfast. I should receive an award from somebody because I would buy fruit, I would buy little things like cinnamon rolls, and many other things so they could eat. I know that breakfast is an important meal and a hungry mind cannot learn. They started the breakfast program when I transferred to Sallas Mahone Elementary School.

As far as integration of the schools is concerned, except for more and better supplies, I don't see any advantages or disadvantages because Blacks were in the same situation socially and the same old things were going on outside of the classroom. In the classroom a third grade Black teacher in a Black school, had to do the same things she had always done if she had to move over and start teaching in a White school. One disadvantage I could see is if we went into a White school situation and it came time to choose the teacher of the year we were outnumbered by White teachers so we didn't have the opportunity to be voted teacher of the year. The same is true when it came to voting on a lead teacher within a particular department. Now, that was one disadvantage because you didn't have enough Blacks to support you and then nine times out of ten, White teachers had the mentality that Black teachers were not good enough as teachers to be *teacher-of the-year*. Of course, in 1963, I was teacher of the year at South Street Elementary School, which was a Black school.

One time the bus broke down and the students did not arrive in time for breakfast. When they arrived and started going into the lunchroom to eat breakfast, a White teacher said to them, "You're late, you don't need breakfast," as if she

was buying the food and it belonged to her. So, the students came in my room crying and that upset me to the highest. I asked them why they were crying and they stated, "Mrs. 'Blank, Blank' wouldn't let us get breakfast." A little learning center area was located in the back of my classroom and I told those students to go and sit in that area and I told them not to cry because, "I'm going to get you some food if I have to go to Harvey's [a local grocery store]. I'm going to get you some breakfast this morning." So, I went to the lunchroom and I explained to the dietician that the students had missed breakfast because their bus had broken down and I wanted to bring them to the lunchroom so they could get breakfast and take it back to my room and eat it. The children got breakfast and carried it back to my room where they ate it. I told them anytime a bus breaks down, anytime there is an emergency, [speaking with emphasis] "you will eat even if I have to walk off my job and go to Harvey's to get a box of sugar pops and a quart of milk" [she laughs as she finishes the statement]. I care for children and I did that because I stood my ground, and I wasn't afraid. I was a veteran teacher and I did what I had to do to get my point over. I was taught young, "as long as you are right, do what you have to do." I conquered that.

The issue of disciplining children changed in most instances when they integrated schools. There was a Caucasian parent who came to school and stated that she didn't want me disciplining or spanking her child. She told me if he needed to be disciplined to call her and she would come and do it. I told her that

she was welcome to come and do that because I didn't want to spank her child anymore than I wanted her to spank mine.

Then the next thing they did was to come up with a law that if any paddling had to be done, it would have to be done before another teacher or the principal. I believe this new disciplinary procedure sprung primarily from school integration, I may be wrong, but it wasn't like that when the schools were segregated. In segregated Black schools if a child needed disciplining you did it. But I think Whites felt that Black teachers were going to get back at Whites for years of mistreating them through extremely severe punishment of their children. But no Black teacher had a mentality for brutalizing anybody's child. I would tell parents if my discipline is for one child, then my discipline is for the others as well. But I didn't have to spank children. I didn't have to hit a child at all. I used a lot of assertive discipline. If a child was disruptive, I would call that child aside or keep the child during recess and ask why he or she acted out. "What were your reasons?" OK, "Was it wrong or right?" "What can you do in the future to keep it from happening again?" I also came up with another strategy when a student was unruly, or acting up, I had the student write his mother and father a letter. The letter explained what the child did wrong and stated that Mrs. Fisher ask the student to write the letter to see if the parents could help the child be a better student in school. I didn't spank the child. I did that a lot. Oh, they didn't want to write their parents because they knew what was coming.

I learned about White teachers and Black teachers having the same credentials and experience but being paid different salaries. The reason I know that for a fact is because we got paid once a month and my husband and I went into the bank to make a deposit and one of the Caucasian teachers left her pay stub on the counter by mistake. My husband curiously picked it up and saw that there was a great difference in the payment of salaries. We saw White teachers working at the same level in education as Black teachers but being paid more. The state of Georgia had drawn up two pay scales. One with inferior or lower pay for Black teachers and one for White teachers with higher pay, regardless of credentials or whether a Black teacher had been teaching longer or not.

When I became a teacher we had what we call the GTEA, [Georgia Teachers and Educators Association], which was the Black professional organization for educators. Then we had the GAE, [Georgia Association of Educators], which was a White organization, and each group had a separate pay scale for teachers that the state provided. When the two organizations were about to merge, Horace Tate, head of the GTEA, got the White teachers' pay scale from the state superintendent's office in Atlanta, Georgia and exposed the salary differences. After that the state of Georgia required all school systems to publish their payroll records. School systems had to provide information about teachers' tenure and academic credentials, including T-5 certificates and all across the entire pay scale from beginning teacher to doctorate level teachers. After we started receiving the state reports we really found out that there was a discrepancy

between the salaries of Black and White teachers. After we exposed the salary discrepancies they had to pay all teachers the same but that doesn't say there isn't some under-the-counter work still going on; we really don't know. But I do know that there was a discrepancy in the salary they gave Blacks. Eventually, they leveled off salaries between White and Black teachers but they never did give Black teachers any money to compensate for what other teachers [White teacher] had been getting. When Horace Tate exposed it they just corrected the problem and went on. Really and truly this is very interesting and it's very sad, in fact, I think we need to go back and ask for the pay we did not receive.

When schools integrated, state school officials just said, "Well, we are going to send the salary scale to the GTEA and we are also going to send the GEA the salary scale. They sent both groups the same pay scale, but when we compared our salaries with what White teachers had previously gotten, we found out there had indeed been a salary difference. Even today they are talking about lead teachers and good teachers and I think that's just one of the ways that may have been used to justify paying Caucasian teachers more.

I am going to put it this way, if a principal or superintendent is going to sit up there and say, "We want a lead teacher or we want a good teacher." Then he should have hired a good teacher from day one. That teacher should have been a good teacher and certified when he or she teacher was hired so you don't have to go out looking for a good teacher or a lead teacher because you hired that person from day one. You ought to know what you have. You don't have to have the

discrepancies as to why principals want to pay a particular teacher more than others. Principals should hire all good qualified and certified teachers from day one and then they would know what they had. Then if teachers are not doing their jobs or if they are not measuring up to what is expected of a good teacher then weed them out. It's just that simple.

I was a member of the NEA [National Education Association], ah...the GTEA at that time, and the GAE, so I was involved with all of the professional education associations that were there for teachers. Black teachers were very much encouraged to belong to these professional organizations. In and through teaching I think Black teachers felt that they were professionals, they had no reason not to. I say this because when they graduated with their baccalaureate degrees and passed the certification examination, they were certified to teach in the state of Georgia. They had their profession in their hands.

At one time we had two associations for parents, one for Blacks, the Parent Teacher Association or PTA, and one for Whites, the Parent Teacher Organization or PTO. The national organization is known as the Parent Teacher Association. and it was in favor of school integration, but White southerners did not want to integrate their schools. The so-called "rednecks" didn't want to integrate and they didn't want to go along with the PTA and follow the same guidelines so they made up their own Parent Teacher Association and called it the Parent Teacher Organization or PTO. They started a separate organization because they did not want to go along with the laws of the PTA and follow the same guidelines. That's

how it developed. And I could care less for PTO's because they don't represent the true meaning of Parent Teacher Associations.

Whites started PAGE [Professional Association of Georgia Educators] the same way. PAGE was a White educator's group that did not want to mix with the Georgia Teachers and Education Association nor the Georgia Association of Educators. So, they said, "Well, we are not going to integrate, we don't want any Black people in our group, so we're going to call ourselves PAGE." So, they became PAGE. They pulled out from the PTA for different reasons and renamed themselves. However, they found out that the organization that was integrated was doing more than any other organization for getting teachers pay raises and improving their work conditions. Some Whites did gradually come back to the PTA and I think they gradually phased out PAGE because I don't hear anything about it anymore.

I worked under a Jeanes supervisor in Valdosta. I never worked under a White Jeanes supervisor. After schools integrated they cut out Jeanes teachers. When schools integrated, "all of a sudden we didn't need Jeanes supervisors." They used to come sit in the back of our classroom and observe our teaching and report to the Black principal or the White superintendent. But they didn't go into the White schools. No, the Black Jeanes supervisors went strictly into Black schools and observed Black teachers, and evaluated their performance. Then they reported their findings and if teachers were not performing as expected, they either

loss their jobs or they had to undertake special training according to the recommendation of the Jeanes supervisor.

They use portfolios to evaluate teachers now. They also use peer evaluations, which allow teachers to observe other teachers. However, this type of peer evaluation is done with teachers who have less than five years teaching experience. This is what I meant earlier when I stated that we should not keep bad teachers around for five years. If a principal says, "Teachers are not doing their jobs." Then I say, "He should have hired a good teacher in the first place." So, there shouldn't be a need for teachers who perform poorly to be around for many years. Also, all children should be taught equally and all children should learn and be prepared to move from one grade level to the next.

I really never saw White principals or administrators show favoritism toward lighter skinned Black teachers as opposed to darker skinned Black teachers. I didn't see that. I have always had a professional attitude in everything that I do. I would get in there and do what I had to do and I didn't experience principals showing favoritism. I was never personally mistreated and if it happened, I did not catch it. But there were some Caucasian teachers who didn't like me because of the way I dressed and I was a well-dressed person. What was right silly about it was they would ask my aide, "Can she afford to dress like that?"

One time my principal who was White indicated on my evaluation that I dressed fairly. He also indicated that I would be a better teacher if I would go out

into the community and get people to join the PTO. Then he gave me three days to review the evaluation and sign it. I brought it home and I reviewed it with my husband. He asked me if I was going to sign it. I said, "No, I am not going to sign this." I said, "I am four feet, eleven, but I can handle it!" After I returned it the principal called me into his office and asked why I didn't sign it. I said, "I didn't sign it because you said I dress fairly." Then I said to him, "I am a top, immaculate, and neat dresser. I wear conservative career clothes. The reason I dress like this is because I attended a Black institution where I was taught to dress professionally and that's the way I am dressing." I said, "I am not wearing blue jeans, T-shirts, satin dresses, and flip-flop shoes. That's not my personality. When I was growing up my parents were dressers. It's just a part of me and I don't appreciate you saying I dress fairly because you are not my fashion designer and I don't think you know that much about women's clothes. So, you just don't dictate to me how to dress and I'm not signing it." And I said, "Secondly, it is not my duty to go out into the community and entice parents to join the PTO organization. In the first place, I don't go along with PTO, I go along with PTA. I was hired to be in the classroom, now if anybody needs to go out and get parents then that's a job for the PTO's presidents and its members. If you want PTO membership, that's not my job and I am not signing the evaluation because that's not me. What you have written on my evaluation is a derogatory statement and it doesn't have anything to do with my ability to teach and my education." I didn't sign it and I went back to my classroom.

After a while he came to my door and disrespectfully shouted out across the classroom, "Mrs. Fisher, I asked you to sign this evaluation, and if you don't sign it, I am going to have to call the superintendent!" I was writing on the board and I had an eraser in my hand. I took that eraser and threw it across the room. Then I started talking loudly and said, "I don't care who you call, you can call the President of the United States, you can call the superintendent, or anyone else you like!" He called the superintendent.

Another teacher confronted him because he owned a lot of little row houses around the school that were in a state of disrepair, with pit toilets, and no running water. One day he [the principal] was complaining about the flies in the lunchroom, and a teacher told him if he got rid of those pit toilets and those little row houses the flies wouldn't be coming in the lunchroom. He got mad with her and wrote her up badly [gave her a poor evaluation]. He also wrote up badly a lawyer's wife [a White teacher], because she said she didn't see any difference in White and Black children learning. All children can learn. All children are wonderful beings; they learn the same way and there is no basic difference in them. So, he wrote all three of us up, one White and two Blacks.

So, the superintendent came, he called the three of us in and reviewed our evaluations and read them. He then told the principal, "Mrs. Fisher is one of my top teachers in this city, and I hired these teachers on the stature of their talent and ability. They are good citizens and they are good teachers, and I don't blame Mrs. Fisher and the other teachers for not signing these evaluations." It was about 10:00

a.m. then and he told the principal he was leaving and he would be back at 12:00 noon, and he should have all three evaluations in order and to our satisfaction. He said, "These are my top teachers", and then he said, "You are walking" [indicating the principal would be relieved of his duties]. He then turned to us and said, "Ladies, teachers, keep up the good work, I don't blame you, I would not sign those evaluations either," and then he walked out. At 12:00 the principal returned and called us into the office and asked if we were satisfied with our evaluations that he had redone. He had to redo the evaluations. "I think he was being racist, yes, he was absolutely; you can read between the lines. This was a White racist principal here in Valdosta and we had a group of them." But you have to know how to stand your ground and speak in a professional way and how to cover your back. Say what you have to say and let them know that you're not a little puppy dog, you are not dancing to their music, and then they don't try to walk all over you. "You don't dish out this wool to me and expect me to sign it because you're a White man and I'm a Black woman."

So, when the superintendent came back, everything was all well and good. They expected me to become insubordinate and mad, but I didn't. I used my professional ethics and I used it in a nice professional voice, and got over what I had to say.

Now, about all of those Black students that were in the band at Pinevale [the segregated Black High School that was in Valdosta prior to school integration], from what I could gather and what I could see, there was a difference

in the marching music and the performance of the White school's band, and the Black school's band. Whites would just play little Pomp and Circumstance and march down the street. Blacks would perform and do lively music. Their style, their precision, and their marching was much greater, much more animated, and people enjoyed their performances. Then too, I got the feeling Whites were saying, or at least thinking, "All these Blacks coming in here, you know they are going to come in here and take over our band. You're not going to come over here and take over our cheer leading squad. You're not going to come over here and take over our football team." But nine times out of ten, the best players were Black. We started winning state championships with Black players. But, segregation was prevalent here in Valdosta, and it still is. They closed Pinevale [the Black high school] as a high school and initially, very few Blacks played on the Valdosta High School team.

Since Valdosta High was a White school the homecoming queens were White. A few years after the high school integrated they came up with the idea, "this year we'll have a White queen and next year we'll have a Black queen." They started rotating homecoming queens and that's what they are doing now, even to this day. What they do now is when it's time for a Black girl to be queen the White girls just don't run. That's the stereotypical way they do things to maintain segregation in a cunning sense, cover it up, pretending they are giving us equal opportunity. But it's not equal opportunity; it's just a rotation. [mocking what school officials say],"Well, we'll let you have it this year and we'll have it

next year," which is a stupid idea. I think students should be chosen on the basis of their merit and their academic ability.

Tracking was prevalent in Valdosta. I am absolutely sure; 100 percent sure of that. White teachers were quick to label Black children and say they are remedial or they can't read, and place them on a lower level. During one of the best years of teaching I ever had, I received a class of retained students. These students had gone through first, second, and now they were in third grade and some of them had been repeaters, and to my knowledge some of those children had not been taught properly. I got those kids, I gave them pre-reading care, and I tested those children. By the end of the year when they took their spring examinations, those children I taught had improved. These were third graders. Students who came to me reading on first grade and second grade levels had measurably improved by the eighth month of second grade. I had taught them and they had improved vocabularies and were achieving in reading. I had three students achieving on twelfth grade reading level. The others were achieving on seventh, or eighth grade level, everybody was above grade level, but they came to me as under achievers. I had the interest, talent, and ability to help those students attain the level where they should have been. I did it and I took pride in doing so.

Today, I see them and some of them are doctors, some are teachers, and reading instructors. We go through a lot but if we care about students, and if we care about teaching, then we care about the future of America. [rising up and speaking loudly and with excitement] "These Black people are going to be a part

of America whether others like it or not. As a teacher you get in there and you do your job. And we [teachers] feel proud about it because we have a talent, we have ability, we can do, and we can see learning taking place. We can see children enjoying learning and being in an environment where they want to learn. So, yes, it takes a Black teacher to get in there and push those Black children as far as they can go. That's still happening although there are some people who grew up and never attended segregated schools. They do not know what we went through or what is really happening now. Racism is still prevalent and racial things are still happening that need to be corrected." [she sits down onto the sofa as she continues speaking] For racist Whites, Black teachers who have been the most respected and revered people in our community are just niggers too.

Some White teachers push our kids profoundly. Some, I don't know about at all. I know some White teachers who taught my son and they pushed him so he could do well. They told me he was a good student. My son could learn; he was a smart person, but they marveled at his ability and his academic achievement when he graduated superlative. Of course, we were behind our son and we pushed education in our home. Yes, there are some very good Caucasian teachers. I have had opportunity to know some of them, but I don't know all of them.

I have heard in some instances about situations similar to the one here in Valdosta, where we have about 95 percent White teachers and only 5 percent Black. However, the student population is different, there are more Black students in the system than there are White students, so the teacher-student population is

way out of proportion. However, I believe cases such as this represent the extreme. Valdosta, Georgia, has the most segregated school system in the whole state of Georgia. I am speaking in terms of integrating Black teachers into the system. They haven't done a good job of that because they aren't trying to.

I became concerned and I did ask the person who is in charge of hiring teachers why couldn't they find more Black teachers to put in the classroom. She told me they just could not find them. So I asked, "Have you heard of Clark College [now Clark-Atlanta University], Morehouse, Spelman, or Morris Brown College?" I gave her a whole listing of as many Black colleges as I could name. I said those institutions are graduating students in the field of education every year, and I said, Albany State University is doing the same thing. Then the next thing I was told was Blacks were going into the field of technology and engineering and other non-teaching fields. I said, "That might be true, and I am proud of them seeking other careers but there is only a hand full of Blacks that are going into those fields. There are many Black students who are still going into the field of education, [speaking with great emphasis and very loudly] so hire them! Don't give me that baloney about you can't find them…let me go recruit teachers, I can get you some." This system is thoroughly segregated because those [Whites] in charge think "segregated."

Now we have a Black superintendent. They put him in there as a token and they didn't intend for him to be superintendent very long. They thought he would be gone within a short while but he's been there three years. Some people here feel

they own the town or run the town and they want to run the school system and the superintendent. So, being a neophyte, the Black superintendent is trying to do what he has to do to survive, but his hands are tied. But I think it's going to come to a point where he is going to untie those hands and do what he's supposed to do. He is an intelligent person, and it's not him, it's the media, and the persons on the school board who are doing the hiring. When he stands up and does his job, they will see he is real. They got rid of the previous White superintendent because he [the previous White superintendent] was in the process of integrating the teachers and getting Black kids out of those remedial classes. He said, "Too many Black kids are in remedial classes, they're talented and many of them don't need to be there." When he made teachers get up and do what they had to do, they got rid of him, claiming he was giving them too much paper work.

We have a small school newspaper called *The Cat Chat*, and one thing I liked about him [the previous White superintendent] is his column would be on the front page of that newspaper and he would quote Benjamin E. Mays, and Martin Luther King, Jr. He would always have a saying from Benjamin Mays or Martin Luther King, Jr. He told teachers they were not teaching Black children. He said Black children could learn and he was going to cut out [stop] what was going on. So, they got rid of him. They said everything bad about him but he was one of the best. He had set good goals and he was getting our schools [Valdosta schools] in line with other schools in the state of Georgia.

One of the best-integrated schools in the state of Georgia is in Rome Georgia. I got this from Dr. [she states the director's name but it is omitted here] who is the Director of the Retired Teachers Association of the State of Georgia. He gave us the information about Rome, Georgia, last year at our conference in Augusta, Georgia. He said that in Rome, Black and White people and others of different races get along with each other and they help each other. Teachers and students in each classroom and in each school are fifty-fifty. They don't have all this violence, criminal acts, and all these racial spats that most southern cities experience.

There are schools here in the Valdosta School System that are pretty much segregated today. A good example is Sallas Mahone Elementary, the school where I last worked. The city built a new school out in an upper echelon area known as the Lake Laurie area, which is a White community way out in an exclusive area for the wealthy. It is actually about six or seven miles north of town. Little Black children will have to be bussed into that area. Of course, they were bussed before, but some of them could walk and some parents could carry their children. However, they could still do that. I understand that there are only three Black teachers on the faculty over there. I don't know how many Black students are out there because the laws of integration require students to attend school based on the geographic area in which they live. I doubt if there are as many Black students as there are White students because Whites moved out there and then buckled the

area [Whites moved to far-out segregated subdivisions and neighborhoods where most Blacks and other minority groups can't afford to buy property].

Black students who attend the new school out in the suburbs of Valdosta have to be bussed into the area. Yet, the ratio of Black and White faculty members is way out of proportion. About 95 percent of the teachers are White and 5 percent are Black. Black students want to see some role models of their own race. But when we have a surplus of one race of people dominating everything then Black children don't get much of an opportunity to look at role models that look like themselves or that they may want to look up to. They want to see more Black teachers in action. It is not that they just want to have a Black teacher but they want to see more Blacks in the school system instead of just three out of forty-five.

Our Black parents need to get up and start World War III when it comes to [she laughs hardily] segregation here in Valdosta. Parents have a voice. Also, the Federal Government needs to step in and do something about it. I think they are in the process of doing that now. The schools in Valdosta are now being built North of Valdosta, out near North Perimeter Road. Whites are leaving the South side of town and the West side of town and moving for their convenience. So, that's what you have here.

All I will say is our Black parents need to get up and declare war on segregation of their students in these schools. Blacks must get the faculty members they need in Valdosta because they are out there. If Blacks don't get up there and fight for it they are not going to get it. We need to stop saying, "Yes sir, it's all

right, my child is going to school and the teacher is nice to my child," because those teachers put up a front when parents come, [mocking teachers speaking to parents about their children], "Oh, he's so sweet, he's that, he's this, and he's the other." But deep within, most of them don't mean it. Some of them do, some don't. Nine times out of ten I fault the citizens of Valdosta and I fault the parents, they are the instigators that need to go out there and say, "Look, now we are not going to have this. We are going to have the Federal Government Officials step in and do what they are supposed to do." They should be more visible, and come in and look at what's going on. But I think that's what's going on now. "I believe federal officials are coming in and straighten up this segregated mess we have here in Valdosta. As soon as we do that, we can get what we want because in this day and time, the year 2002, this shouldn't be happening." But I just don't know, maybe most parents or citizens don't have the education, or the will power, or the know-how to do it. But they can get a lawyer to do it. Education is very important because it's the one institution that impresses upon us what's going on in society, and what we intend to become.

I ran for public office and I won a seat on the Board of Education. I won the seat in district one and I'm a new member of the Board of Education. They divided the districts so Blacks could be represented on the Board of Education and the City Council. I am in district one and I won the election with a landslide vote. I am proud to be a member of the board. At one time, I was on the inside looking out, and then I was on the outside looking in, and now, I'm back in there. I know

what's going on, I know the situations we face, and I know the system. I know exactly what needs to be done. Many underhanded things need to be told and need to be documented, and everybody ought to know about it.

There is no need of sitting up and pretending it didn't happen or it doesn't go on. It is going on. If we just get up there and tell the truth we can change this thing and let the world know what's going on. We must become more involved. Our new superintendent is as Black as they come [she laughs loudly] and he's very intelligent. A certain individual has already said, "That's too much money for a Black man to make." You got it? That's a "Redneck," that's racists right there, and he's on the Board of Education. He said that was too much money for a Black man to make. But it's all right for "Billy Bob," a White man to make that kind of money.

I did my internship at Bradley University, in Peoria, Illinois, and I taught fifth grade ah…during my internship. I taught Senator Bob Cur's daughter in a class at Whittier Elementary School, in Peoria, Illinois. I taught her mathematics.

In 30 years of teaching, I have experienced both segregation and integration, and I've touched the lives of no doubt, hundreds of young boys and girls who have gone on to be professionals, some of whom are educators. I retired in June of 1989. This is my 13th year of retirement coming up and I am enjoying every minute of it. My reward for the thirty years she taught public school in Georgia is the joy of knowing that learning was taking place and I was a part of that process.

Teachers have made us what we are and teachers are very important in our society, but grossly under paid. I look at it this way, consider the Michael Jordan's, the Magic Johnson's, and the Tiger Woods', a teacher taught those people how to read and write. Now they have great professions. All because of their teacher!

After teaching 30 years and having been retired almost 13 years, I could only wonder where Mrs. Fisher gets her energy. Presently her life is full of meetings and civic activities. I was grateful that she readjusted her busy schedule on two different days to grant me time for the interviews. She is constantly on the move and she can only rarely be caught at home. This is especially true since she was elected to the Board of Education for the Valdosta City School System.

Chapter IV.

SUMMARY OF EMERGENT THEMES ACROSS THE PORTRAITS

Summary

Although African American teachers in Georgia were constrained by racial and political issues between 1930 and 1970 they maintained a particular set of teaching and nurturing processes referred to by the eleven teachers I interviewed and noted in the literature as African American pedagogy (Delpit, 1988; Foster, 1997; King, 1993; Siddle Walker 2001).

It is this pedagogy and the culture of which it was a part that was central to the stories told to me about Black education. The stories provided a relative and consistent perspective that connected participants' recollections of classroom experiences, teaching and learning strategies, personal philosophies about life as an African American, and as an educator with the ability to manage problems and practices that teachers and school administrators face today. As these retired teachers told the stories, the insights gleaned from them add important historical perspectives to the problems and conditions involving teaching, school administration, and student discipline. Although the 11 retired teachers shared quite diverse stories there were eight themes that emerged as significant to all teachers.

Minority Achievement and the Effect of the Desegregated School

Mahard and Crain, in their chapter titled, *Research on Minority Achievement in Desegregated Schools* (1983) in which they pointed out that research on the effects of school desegregation is usually focused primarily on minority achievement. They pointed to two reasons for this occurrence: (a) Most people believe that school desegregation is an educational innovation designed to improve the cognitive ability of African Americans and other minorities, and (b) many educators believe the ability to learn and reason, and academic achievement are relatively easily measured through the use of standardized tests that are already part of the normal educational evaluation process of a school system.

Mahard and Crain (1983) suggested in their work that research on African American achievement in schools, as late as the early 1980s is plentiful, but most of the studies are unpublished and are narrowly focused on settings such as single cities. Moreover, they found that very few of the studies were published in journals or books and most that addressed education from an African American perspective and assessed African American students' achievements after desegregation are unpublished doctoral dissertations. These small-scale studies on desegregated schooling are usually obscure and at best they constitute only topics of temporary interest within the literature.

Studies on the effects of a popular theory of desegregation that claimed Black students benefit from the "lateral transmission" (Mahard & Crain, 1983, p. 105) of values and behavioral norms from White students, failed to provide

evidence would support the theory (Maruyama & Miller, 1979, 1980; Patchen, 1982; Patchen, Hofmann, & Brown, 1980). The theory of lateral transmission has to do with the extent to which one is influenced as a result of personal contact and regular association with another. The participants in this study agreed that Black students were not necessarily transformed into excellent students by simply placing them in schools with White children and White teachers. They also suggested that African American students were usually more successful in a school environment that was receptive and sensitive to the culture and particular needs of African American students. In short, being around White students does not enhance the academic performance of Black students. The research conducted by and Maruyama and Miller (1979, 1980), Patchen (1982), and by Patchen et al. (1980) showed that personal contact with White students in desegregated schools was irrelevant to the performance of Black students. The work of these researchers and the perspectives of the 11 teachers in this study refuted the notion that Black students acquire better study habits or develop more achievement-oriented values from associating with Whites or from having White friends. The results of this research provided an avenue of discussion for an alternative theory proposed by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968), which argued that students performed better when teachers had higher expectations about their ability to learn. Rosenthal's and Jacobson's alternative theory supported the notion that Black students would perform better in middle-class desegregated schools because teachers in these schools tended to pace teaching to the average rate of

learning in the class, which was thought to be lower in Black schools than in White schools.

Other studies indicated different consequences for desegregated schools. Several studies reported that Black achievement was higher in schools where racial attitudes of teachers, school administrators, and the overall racial climate of the classroom were more positive (Coulson, et al., 1977; Crain, Mahard, & Narot, 1982; Forehand, Ragosta, & Rock, 1976). Katz (1964) conducted research in the early 1960s that suggested that the academic performance of African Americans might be significantly diminished in biracial situations that presented social threats. He contended that hostility or even indifference from Whites was likely to be a distraction that impeded the ability of Black children and created anxiety that interfered with efficient learning. Katz (1964) also found that when White children displayed an attitude of social acceptance of Black children, an increase in Black children's academic motivation was often noticed, particularly if the Whites were performing better than the Blacks, which was often the case. However, there are also studies that indicated that interracial social acceptance did not necessarily lead to improved academic achievement by Blacks (Maruyama & Miller, 1979, 1980). On the other hand, a reasonable argument could be made that an extremely negative interracial atmosphere might lead to a decline in achievement for both White and Black students.

The latter argument supports the beliefs that the participants in this study conveyed—that Black students' academic performance and social behavior were

diminished when placed in integrated schools where White teachers did not display a caring and nurturing attitude toward them. The participants in this study suggested that Black students became more rebellious when White teachers showed insensitivity, a lack of understanding and compassion, and were quick to discipline and police Black students more so than White students.

The historical data in this study made known how the southern policy of racial discrimination blocked and created barriers that to some degree negated the effectiveness of African American teachers. Consequently, African American teachers, prior to school desegregation struggled to provide a quality of education for their students that would equal the high quality provided in some White schools. Racist and discriminatory policies under which African American teachers and students were forced to function during the years of public school segregation in Georgia certainly left economic and social scars that will demean the character, quality, and value others associate with Blacks for many years (Bullock, 1967).

It has been almost 47 years since nine Black students entered Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, on September 23, 1957, and 50 years since the 1954 Supreme Court decision that ruled school segregation unconstitutional in the landmark case of *Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education*. Since that time, the issue of school desegregation has divided communities, states, and the nation. Politics has been used as the great instrument to fight for and against school systems attempting to desegregate. Today, the legally sanctioned desegregated school

systems of the south have been disassembled, and the majority population of Americans of all races and in all parts of the country acknowledge that school desegregation in America is, at least in theory and in principle, a desirable policy and one that will lead to a more progressive America (Rossell & Hawley, 1983).

Still, with the vast majority of Americans acknowledging that school desegregation is more desirable than not in our nation, implementing school desegregation remains controversial. It often gives rise to latent conflict between different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups (Rossell & Hawley, 1983). According to the 11 participants in this study, the implementation of desegregation in schools resulted in problems that school administrators and teachers usually were not prepared to deal with, either because the problem had not existed prior to desegregation or because they had not been held accountable for the problem prior to desegregation. Minority achievement is a prime example that falls into this latter category—School administrators who faced integrated school situations for the first time faced a challenge that they had not previously had to deal with. As long as African American students attended their own schools, White parents, teachers, and the media were not very concerned about the gap between White and Black students. When African American students (and other minority students) began attending the same school and sat in the same classrooms as White students, the issue of achievement and the gap between White and Black students became a major one. Now this issue has been amplified by the recent political push to implement "No Child Left Behind" (Georgia

Department of Education, 2004), and the associated increased emphasis on standardized testing. This being the case, we can understand that school desegregation subjected the school system to uncomfortable situations that often included new demands for educational excellence and skepticism, especially among Whites.

Prior to desegregation, through personal experience and the stories told by the 11 teachers who participated in this study, classrooms in Georgia's public schools were primarily segregated by race, a few were segregated based on class, and even fewer were sometimes segregated based on achievement (Foster, 1997; Rossell & Hawley, 1983). To the extent that races often differ in social class, economic stability, and achievement, school officials who were required to integrate Georgia's schools and desegregate classrooms sometimes had to deal with a new set of problems and challenges that involved student diversity that they had not dealt with prior to school desegregation. For a large number of Whites, the assertion that school desegregation was a remedy for past injustices and a way of improving education for African Americans implied that the quality of their children's education would suffer (Foster, 1997; Rossell & Hawley, 1983). The teachers in this study maintained that White teachers were not better teachers than Black teachers and that in some instances, White teachers were not as qualified as Black teachers. The participants in this study claimed that their approach to teaching children held more compassion and tolerance for students' needs beyond the classroom. The 11 participants in this study offered bold

statements that if all teachers were sensitive to the needs of all children and approached teaching with the attitude that all children could learn and held high expectations of all children, then no child's education would suffer.

Another issue that the effects of school desegregation raised is parental concern about interracial conflict. A wide range of safety concerns usually became more intensified when parents considered that their children might attend schools in distant, unfamiliar neighborhoods. Mrs. Smith believed this was particularly true when White parents considered that their children might attend schools in Black neighborhoods. Mrs. Smith and other participants in this study believed that segregation often and typically minimized such concerns by keeping neighborhoods homogeneous, by screening access to certain social and civic organizations, by maintaining private clubs and recreational facilities, and by regulating access to certain professions. Segregated schools and neighborhoods have for years served as a safety barrier that protected the social and economic interests of those who *have* and isolates those who *do not have.* School desegregation undermined the strength of these social barriers and pulled together children and families with different values, social statuses, experiences, and privileges. Such being the case, school desegregation was perhaps *the* greatest threat to dismantling barriers that seed bigotry, more so than any other social policy (Mahard & Crain, 1983).

The school is a microcosm of the larger society in which it exists. The problems schools faced in adapting to desegregation, to a larger extent, were the

problems that the greater society was evading, but must eventually face. Problems in schools influence and are influenced by the problems of local communities in adjusting to change imposed by the courts and governments. Each community or group within communities seeks to sustain its culture and preserve a sense of homogeneous identity. Pearce (1980) conducted a study on the relationship between school desegregation and residential integration in which he investigated seven matched desegregated-segregated pairs of school districts. Pierce's data indicated that between 1970 and some years after 1975 (depending on the availability of data) desegregated school districts had significantly greater reductions in residential segregation than their segregated pair, with no greater increase in the proportion of Black residents (Pearce, 1980). The research suggested that the reason there is segregation within schools in the first place is that Whites rarely choose to live in the same neighborhoods with those of another race. Usually, Whites have to be mandated to do so by court imposed laws that allow people of other races and ethnic origin to also live in so called "White" neighborhoods (Pearce, 1980).

The Battle for School Desegregation

"School desegregation reminds us of just how separate we are" (Rossell & Hawley, 1983, p. 4). The real neglect of schools in Black neighborhoods and the attentiveness to schools in White neighborhoods was usually magnified and exposed as a result of the desegregation process (Rossell & Hawley, 1983). The issue of desegregating public schools revealed the extent to which the myth of the

melting pot exists and functions in America and showed various levels of racism, classism, and segregation (Rossell & Hawley, 1983).

The battle for school integration in America magnified and dramatized how racial and ethnic discrimination usually determined where individuals lived and worked, and the standards that were acceptable when deciding whether social justice and a quality education would be achieved for disparaged groups within society. Historically, in America, school desegregation served as the "fundamental challenge to the beliefs and structures that sustain racial, ethnic, and social class distinctions" (Rossell & Hawley, 1983). African American teachers initially believed that school desegregation would be better for Blacks than segregated schools because it would eventually eradicate many of the inequities associated with racism in America and bring about a faster pace of social and economic improvement for Blacks. The fundamental belief the teachers in this study along with others who pressed the courts to change segregated schooling in Georgia based on race was that if Black children were educated in the same schools as White children, then Blacks would no longer be relegated to substandard jobs, forced to live in poverty riddled neighborhoods, and endure racism.

Support of a basic belief and philosophy reported by the participants in this study that African Americans have long desired a quality education and understood that education was the key that would allow them the opportunity to overcome many social and economic barriers is well documented by contemporary

scholars, such as Anderson (1988), Delpit (1988), Foster (1997), Siddle Walker (2001), and O'Brien (1999). These barriers included inferior public schooling, racial prejudice, racial segregation, unequal pay for equal work, social and political exploitation, and a host of other injustices. On the other hand, Whites considered their relative privilege in these domains to be a natural benefit and prerogative (O'Brien, 1999).

The Role of the African American Teacher

This study suggested that African American teachers were heavily influenced and motivated by family members and others that taught them to pursue careers as educators. The 11 teachers who participated in this study reported that Black teachers influenced children and their families throughout the Black community. The teachers in this study said that Black teachers were placed on a pedestal and looked upon with much respect by the rest of the Black community. African American teachers inherited a moral duty to make a difference in the lives of young Black children who grew up, lived, and worked in communities where racism was very potent well into the 1980s, and perhaps even to the present time (Dyson, 2003). They were often thrust into positions of community leader and advocate. They were the role models for Black children and the change agents for the African American community. The participants in this study reported that Black teachers recognized teaching as a profession and they possessed a strong commitment to the profession and focused on teacher training

and educational preparation in order to improve themselves and the children they taught.

In an effort to extricate themselves and overcome the barriers that Dyson (2003) called America's original sin, "racism" (p. 8), African Americans desired to, and are becoming, an educated people. To this end, African American teachers assumed a very special and significant role in the African American community and emerged as the single most important influence in the lives of young African American students (Meier, et al., 1989). African American teachers naturally assumed a significant portion of the responsibility to fulfill the needs, and goals of African Americans in their pursuit to overcome the persistence of racism. According to the 11 teachers in this study, Black teachers also assumed the special role as surrogate parents to Black children and students attending public schools and assumed the role of stewards for the communities in which they lived and worked.

Viewing the African American Pedagogy. The reports of the 11 retired teachers that participated in this study suggested that to a great extent there is a particular pedagogy associated with African American teachers and that this particular teaching style fits closely to what Ladson-Billings and Henry (1990) termed, *culturally relevant teaching*. Culturally relevant teaching is a manner of teaching that uses the students' culture to empower students with the ability to critically examine educational content and process and ask what role they have in creating a democratic and multicultural society. This teaching style uses students'

Major Issues Facing Black Educators

Dortch further asserted that over 100 years ago, W. E. B. DuBois and other Black leaders grappled with race and racism as the major issue facing African Americans at that time. A major element in the struggle against racism that DuBois and other Black leaders faced was access to education for the Negro (Bullock, 1967). The issue of receiving a quality public education for African Americans in Georgia was a bitterly contested statewide dispute, deeply entwined with politics and race (O'Brien, 1999). Dortch maintained that as the 21st Century began, one of the major issues facing African American citizens was still be the problem of racism. Another major issue facing African Americans is that young African Americans remain in school and receive a quality education, a goal that was commonly pointed out by the participants in this study. This is especially true for young African American males. Racism still abounds in communities and schools across Georgia and across the nation, and care must be taken to assure that we don't slip backward from the progress already made against this evil (Dortch, 2003). Remaining alert and vigilant of racist attitudes and behavior in schools and in our communities were key issues stressed by the 11 teachers in this study.

The stories told by the 11 teachers participating in this study challenged the accuracy of some of the current literature about African American teachers' lack of preparation and teaching ability. Teachers in this study spoke positively about their training and teaching ability and suggested that not all African American teachers in Georgia received poor or inadequate training, nor was the training

provided to them by historically Black colleges and universities one dimensional as suggested by some traditional histories. This more positive belief about the level of training and the teaching skills of African American teachers is in opposition to the literature cited by Siddle Walker (2001) in which she writes, "Rather, they [Black teachers] emerge from the literature as struggling, poorly educated missionary figures who helped as best they could with racial uplift, despite the daily difficulties of their jobs" (p. 752, 753). According to the 11 teachers interviewed in this study, African American teachers in Georgia possessed multiple levels of advanced education and degrees, and were not limited to one common preparation history. This point was well documented by Foster (1999) and Siddle Walker (2001). Teachers in this study indicated that historically, teacher training for African American teachers in Georgia involved diverse education and training programs, which included formal classroom education from public and private segregated Black colleges and universities, continuing education classes, summer seminars, teacher-training workshops conducted at Black colleges, informal mentoring, and training from experienced African American teachers already in the field. It is noteworthy to mention that this type of diverse preparation and training continue to exist for African American teachers even as they cross the twenty-first century mark.

My own experiences as an African American student and later as a teacher were that African American teachers employed a range of innovative teaching techniques and methodologies to get students to understand what was being

taught. The limited body of literature offered by African American researchers and scholars suggest that Black teachers were very flexible teachers who often designed lectures supplemented with various learning aids, such as, charts, tables, arts and crafts, demonstrations, and various constructions to assist students in learning. These multi-dimensional teaching strategies that Black teachers used contradict much of the existing literature that suggests that African Teachers are one-dimensional teachers (Siddle Walker, 2001).

Significant positions offered. The participants in this dissertation posited that African American teachers were very much concerned about the conditions, which Black teachers endured, yet they were not overly discouraged. However, these teachers agreed that in many communities and particularly in Georgia prior to desegregation, Black schools were almost always housed in inadequate facilities and often lacked many supplies and materials found in White schools. Anderson (1988) and Bullock (1967) reported similar findings in their research. Yet, African American teachers found within themselves a steadfast power to maintain focus on the obligations they inherited as teachers. In fact, participants in this study questioned traditional data that claimed that African American teachers were usually poorly trained with minimal teaching skills. The general negative position found in traditional literature regarding African American teachers' preparation and ability to teach has increasingly raised suspicion among Blacks (Siddle Walker, 2001). The 11 teachers in this study said that for many years African Americans teaching in segregated Black schools produced significant numbers of

African Americans who were high achievers in many professional fields, including education, medicine, and law. These Black professionals boast that they had excellent Black teachers and received an excellent education from segregated Black schools. Certainly, African American teachers faced difficult challenges in segregated Black schools but these teachers were dedicated, caring professionals who would not settle for Black children giving up on life. African American teachers were caring individuals who nurtured the children they taught. Yet, these teachers were also very authoritative figures that made sure children were obedient and did as they were told or they would be punished.

Another significant position held by participants in this study was that the perspectives of the teachers participating cast doubt on the accuracy of current archival data about the lives and careers of African American teachers. Also, these participants questioned the sources of data compiled without input from African American teachers, a finding Siddle Walker addressed (2001) in her study. Siddle Walker (2001) addressed this issue succinctly when she reported that an over-reliance on one source of data could present a distorted view, "particularly when the data presented represents the lives of people who do not traditionally contribute to such archival sources" (Siddle Walker, 2001, p. 774).

The stories the participants revealed might serve as corroborative evidence that calls into question the validity and reliability of a substantial amount of the traditional historical literature about African American teachers. Perhaps, the perspectives of the African American teachers who participated in this study will

raise legitimate questions about the reliability of some of the recorded history about the role of Black teachers and Black Schools. Contemporary Blacks and other informed scholars might not question to what extent existing traditional data are consistent, rather questions might arise as to what extent traditional data about African American teachers are valid? Moreover, to what extent were reports about African American teachers' careers consistently invalidly reported? As suggested by Siddle Walker (2001), it is possible that a significant amount of oral histories and the original documents in Georgia regarding teacher preparation, ability, commitment, and the overall role of African American teachers were generated from atypical sources.

A more extreme point of view might raise ethical implications about previous reports found in traditional literature. Do Whites deliberately employ lies and deception so that it appears that Black teachers are unqualified or lack certain skills necessary to teach others? Could subjectivity and racism be factors that allow for inaccurate negative reports about the lives and careers of African American teachers? Could a lack of knowledge and understanding about how African American teachers relate to Black children negate positive reports that were offered in this study about their teaching effectiveness and about the degree of teacher-preparation?

This study challenges the issue of whether White teachers were better teachers than Black teachers and the negative reports about the influence that Black teachers had on Black student achievement. Teachers in this study reported

that after schools integrated occurrences existed where White teachers sought instructional help from Black teachers regarding how to effectively teach Black students.

Although school desegregation provided African American teachers and students with better physical facilities, better teaching resources, and more teaching supplies it did not come without a high price and much sacrifice for both. During the first eleven years of school desegregation, African American teachers endured enormous feelings of isolation within integrated schools that were predominantly White and controlled by White principals with White administrative staffs (Foster, 1999). Foster (1999) found that during this period more than 30,000 Black teachers, many of whom were Georgia teachers, lost jobs.

School desegregation fractured much of the intimate relationship Black teachers held with Black children and diminished the influence Black teachers once held within the Black Community. At the core of this break in teacher-student relationship and community influence was the practice of bussing Black children out of community neighborhoods and disproportionately closing previously all Black schools. Bussing was widely practiced in Georgia to achieve public school integration. Perhaps widespread bussing of Blacks and closing many former Black schools, arguably for economic reasons, is necessary. The desegregation process severely splintered the traditional roles of African American teachers and schools that had once been a symbol of pride and hope within the Black community.

The 11 retired African American teachers in this study reported that African American students suffered feelings of isolation in integrated White schools. They often felt as if White teachers ignored Black students and taught if they were teaching only to the White students within the classroom. After public schools desegregated African American students no longer had sustained contact with African American teachers who nurtured and cared for them over the years. African American student memberships declined in various clubs and access to extra curricular activities in integrated schools that were previously characterized as White schools. In previously all White schools Black students certainly were not challenged and encouraged to take leadership roles in student organizations and academic activities. Black students were very likely to be labeled as "trouble makers" and were policed much more than White students. African American students were disproportionately expelled from school for trivial rule infractions and were usually punished more severely than White students who displayed similar misconduct or attitudes.

Emergent Themes

1. Teacher-Student Relationships
2. Community Relationships
3. Racial and Economic Adversity
4. Philosophy of Teaching
5. Teacher Training
6. Historical Myths

7. Family Support

8. Segregation

1. Teacher-Student Relationships

The trademark characterization for the teachers that participated in this study is exemplified in the steadfast way in which Black students were nurtured and cared for by Black teachers. African American teachers represented surrogate parent figures for the children they taught (Foster, 1989). The participants in this study shared the conviction that Black teachers in general were very caring and went the extra mile to care for and nurture not only Black students but also Black children within the communities where the teachers taught and lived.

The African American teacher participants further reported that by contrast White counterparts did not hold the same level of intimacy with students, Black or White. It was stated repeatedly that White teachers did not understand, and in many instances were not aware of the existence of the caring and nurturing attitude held by Black teachers toward Black students. This nurturing and caring attitude that African American teachers possessed in and out of the classroom formed the basis for a unique type of teaching that was not only different from the traditional mode White teachers used but also created a learning environment that provided enormous success for many African American Students.

The stories told by the 11 African American teachers strongly support the literature that argues that a unique African American pedagogy existed among African American teachers (Siddle Walker, 2001). This view certainly agrees with findings by Foster (1997) and Siddle Walker (2001). Participants in this study overwhelmingly support the notion that White teachers they worked with seemingly rarely opened up to students (White or Black) and rarely established any type of personal relationship that went beyond professional boundaries. Siddle Walker (2001) pointed to this contrast in White teachers' relationship with students and cited the argument made by Irvine (1990) to support this lack of insight by White teachers. Participants in this study said that Black teachers and White teachers possessed different styles of teaching and that Black teachers had a unique teaching style.

Part of the African American pedagogy included the belief that teaching academic subject matter was important, but that, equally important was an urgent need to encourage Black students to strive for excellence and high self-esteem. African American teachers voiced a strong obligation to educate Black students beyond what was found in textbooks. The teachers believed that they had a duty to develop and cultivate high moral standards, a wholesome character, and a positive self-belief in their students that they could succeed in a society where the odds were not weighted in their favor. Moreover, the teachers believed that their duty was to provide everything a student needed to survive and more importantly to teach students to become productive citizens

capable of being more than common day laborers. Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Scott, and Mrs. Lumpkin said that Black teachers taught with hope and the understanding that students would one day hold leadership positions within their communities and key positions in business, industry, government, politics, medicine, education, and in many other areas within society. Others strongly suggested that Black teachers felt as if they were "parents away from home" to students. These teachers saw themselves in the role of teacher and parent simultaneously. They felt a compelling responsibility to teach coupled with a responsibility to provide for Black children's social needs and even for their economic needs, to the extent that the teacher was capable. Often, the teachers claimed these feelings of responsibility extended throughout the general community where they lived and taught.

2. *Community Relationships*

Mrs. Smith said in her interview, that excluding the Black church, no other single group impacts and has more sustaining influence on the Black community than African American teachers. Mrs. Smith asserted that through their role as educators, African American teachers for many years had been responsible for changing and uplifting the moral, social, and economic status of the Black community (Gilligan, 1981). Historically, African American teachers have been actively involved with students outside of school in church and community life (Foster, 1990b, Noddings, 1984). Using a unique style of relating to and teaching young Black students African American teachers

forged great strides in improving social and economic conditions within the African American community. King (1993) supported this argument in her findings regarding the Black teaching philosophy and pedagogy.

It should be pointed out that the participants in this study were speaking inclusively when speaking of the relationship between African American teachers and the Black community. These African American teachers were saying that the rich relationship that existed between teachers and the community indeed existed for more than just a few southern Black teachers from Georgia. The claim was that Black teachers' work influenced every aspect of the Black community and that the stories they told me with few exceptions characterized African American teachers across America. Historically, this very special and nurturing relationship, which can be compared to a binding covenant between two individuals, has always existed between Black teachers and the Black community. This study has not discovered evidence of any written statement or formal creed that might serve as a single cohesive element that African American teachers are taught to perpetuate the special relationship held with the Black community. Participants in this study say that it simply emerges from a natural desire to have a better life than what former generations experienced.

What phenomenon bonds African American teachers to their students and the community in such a special way? A closer look at what the participants said provided an answer. The force that fueled this special

> community and parents thought that's what you should be. Teachers were very important in the community, very important. (Shelton, 2004, p. 140)

Mr. Rogers stated, "Teachers were looked upon as special people and they had a lot of respect in the black neighborhood" (Shelton, 2004, p. 243). He later said, "And it was a situation wherein the parent chastised the child in front of the teacher" (p. 243). Parents supported teachers and looked upon teachers as authoritative figures in the community.

Mr. Isom said in his interview, "In the general community people thought of teachers very highly. They were highly respected by parents because they were doing something for their children that they as parents could not do" (Shelton, 2004, p. 314). These statements were typical responses and similar to those made by other participants who continued to offer descriptions that aptly described the special bond and relationship between Black teachers and the Black community.

Mrs. Fisher expressed the relationship in her interview by saying that when she was growing up people in the Black community looked at teachers as role models. African American teachers held the belief that they should be involved in making a difference in the Black community. Siddle Walker (2001) supported this perspective quite lucidly when she recounted how African American teachers understood the community where their students lived and were willing to identify with children in the community. Mrs. Fisher stated, as do other participants in this study, that teachers made home visits as often as

possible and made solid efforts to get around to the whole community. Teachers wanted to get to know the families and children they taught. Black teachers wanted to know where these children lived and what the family situations were like. Mrs. Scott, Mr. Isom, and other participants in my study pointed out that most of these visits meant traveling into poor neighborhoods.

Of the 11 participants that shared their stories with me, eight of them came from poor families. They suggested that a large number of African American teachers in Georgia came from equally poor families and who lived within similar neighborhoods as theirs. Foster (1997) and Siddle Walker (1996) found that a majority of the teachers in their studies did not come from prominent families.

In these neighborhoods a bond was established between teachers, students, and the general community. Black teachers understood that bond and extended it to the students in a way that became a key factor in the overall process of student performance. Siddle Walker (2001, 1996) suggested that as a result of background similarities between Black teachers and the children they taught, the teachers were more familiar with the communities in which the students lived and could better understand the students' specific needs. Thus, Black teachers and Black students had a special relationship. Although there were common elements to the culture from which the teachers and students came, teachers still used home visits and other contacts to get better acquainted with the expectations that the community had for its youth. In turn, teachers

used their knowledge to create learning environments in which the context of expectations for the student was similar to the beliefs and values of their communities.

Mrs. Scott told me that Black teachers felt free to go into these communities even after dark without being afraid, "It was just that close-knit kind of thing between the community and those of us who taught school. Parents supported teachers, even in situations involving discipline problems with their children" (Shelton, 2004, p. 203). This contact provided teachers with a deeper understanding of who each child really was as a human being dealing daily with racism and other complex issues in the Black community rather than *just another student*. She expressed that teachers had to be good citizens, and outstanding Christians who attended church regularly. Mrs. Fisher stated that when members of the community recognized a teacher they considered them idols, "those are our idols and we wanted to be like them" (Shelton, 2004, p. 345). She said that Black teachers have always been considered as the high echelon of the Black community and very well respected among community members.

Due to education level, social status, and professional stability, Black teachers are in a unique position to assume certain leadership roles within the Black community and provide direction regarding a number of social and racial issues affecting those communities. Crawford (1996) provided a very vivid and enlightening illustration of how young Black teachers boldly asserted

themselves against the White establishment in Blakely, Georgia by being openly defiant and protesting when told that Black people were not to be seen about on Election Day and that lights must be turned off on election night. In another illustration of African American teachers taking the lead within the Black community, Crawford (1996) described a scene where Black teachers walked out of a local department store and refused to continue to shop there after a White saleslady told them, "You know we don't allow coloreds to try on dresses. You try it on in this store, and you have to buy it" (p. 81). Mrs. Lumpkin described a similar situation involving her brother when he walked out of a meeting with the superintendent in Moultrie, Georgia because the superintendent kept addressing African Americans in the community as "niggras."

The Black community relied heavily on teachers for managing and resolving a variety of community, social, and economic issues. Black teachers had to carry much of this burden by educating large groups during their schooling years. One issue that Black teachers educated Black students about was racism and its impact on Blacks. Often Black teachers selectively coupled information about racism, specifically the status and existence of the African American community, into the school curriculum (Foster, 1997; Noblit & Dempsey, 1996; Siddle Walker, 2001). One of the Elders, Everett Dawson, in Foster (1997), referred to this supplemental information interposed into the

Black curriculum as, "The serious kind of conversations we were able to have in all-black schools" (p. 9).

3. *Racial and Economic Adversity*

Many times issues and events involving race and racism are sensitive and complex. Often individuals are not objectively open enough to hold honest discussions about racism in America. Black teachers [and African Americans in general] believe that racism is just as wrong as it is sensitive and complex. Through institutionalized policies of racism and segregation the White political power structure in Georgia desired to disenfranchise Blacks by depriving them of the right to vote and to attain education and employment comparable to Whites (Taylor, [On line], 2004). Overt and covert racism cuts through virtually every institution and social unit within American society. Public schools are no exception and through school integration African American teachers found themselves on the front lines of the battlefield of racism. In one form or another racism and race issues have historically been quite common in public school and practiced from the superintendent's office to the classroom. However, because of virtually no ranking among public school teachers, except some schools having what is known as a lead teacher for a particular department, race had little apparent impact on teacher promotion. Yet, according to teachers' perspectives in this study, race had a great impact on African American teachers' salaries and on recognition of teaching excellence.

The fact that public schools were once totally segregated and only integrated when forced to do so by the high courts is one of the strongest indicators that racism indeed existed in public schools and school systems. Teachers in my study shared with me their belief that even today African American teachers must remain watchful for racist attitudes and racist behavior. Overwhelmingly, the African American teachers that I have spoken to agree that integrated schools did not and will not eradicate racist attitudes because such attitudes lie deep within the minds and hearts of those who discriminate based on race. Mrs. Parker and Mrs. Fisher said, based on their experiences, racial prejudice is often transmitted either nonverbally or unconsciously without those who are racially prejudice being aware of their racist attitudes or racist behaviors. Foster (1997) supported this contention in the portraits of Everett Dawson, Ethel Tanner, and others. Pang (1988) supported this argument in her reflection of how prejudicial beliefs are unintentionally reinforced in our classrooms. Mr. Isom, Mrs. Parker, Mrs. Lumpkin, and other teachers in this study agreed with Pang's (1988) findings that suggested prejudicial expressions and behaviors within schoolhouse classrooms are indicators of the existence of racism.

African American teachers reported being frequently confronted with situations involving race and racism. Racism was faced in both segregated and integrated schools where Black teachers taught. While much of the racism Black teachers encountered involved individuals manifesting racism against

other individuals, this study clearly suggests that in schools African American teachers suffered institutional racism equivalent to the level of racism aimed at the general African American community. Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Fisher, Mr. Rogers and other participants in this study validated institutional racism during their interviews with discussions that centered on racist school superintendents such as Ira Jarrell, the noted segregationist and long time superintendent of the Atlanta School System. Participants also make a strong case about institutional racism when discussing how Dr. Horace Tate, former executive director for the GTEA, as well as renowned African American educator and former Georgia State Senator exposed the National Education Association (NEA) and the state superintendent's office attempted to conceal pay discrepancies between White teachers and Black teachers. The NEA is a White professional education organization for public school teachers, which did not accept Blacks as members until 1947 (Siddle Walker, 2001). The NEA and its members perpetuated efforts to maintain the status quo of racism and racial inequities. In her research on African American teachers in Georgia, Siddle Walker (2001) also confirmed Tate's argument about the racist history of the NEA. Mrs. Fisher, Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Parker, and the other teachers expressed strong feelings against any form of racism (overt or covert) aimed toward Blacks. Mrs. Fisher stated about the racism she observed in schools, "But anyway it was ugly and it was wrong."

Across the cases in this study, the teachers overwhelmingly expressed that another widely practiced example of institutionalized racism was the act of White schools sending used, outdated, and worn-out textbooks (often with missing pages) to Black schools. This racist tactic infuriated African American teachers and students. Foster (1997), provided a stunning account of this practice where Everett Dawson declared, "To this day it bothers me that those conditions existed anywhere in this country" (p. 4). The accounts that I have read of Black schoolteachers and principals of public schools and the discussions that I have held with teachers that taught during this time indicates that they were aware of this practice.

In terms of institutionalized racism, African American teachers have long known and fully understood that in America, public education for Whites and Blacks was critically "separate and unequal" and that changes to correct the racial injustices in Georgia's schools did not begin to take place until well after the case of *Brown vs. Board of Education, 1954.* State and local laws backed up racial attitudes and behavior. Historically, local community leaders, politicians, policy-makers, and many common members within the White community tried to deny African Americans access to equal education. Mrs. Parker and Mrs. Terrence spoke of incidences in which Whites who owned land on which Black people lived forced Blacks to miss school to harvest crops. Meier, Stewart, and England, (1989) offered support of this fact with findings that indicated that Whites attempted to deny Blacks any education at

all and limit interracial contact by law to the greatest degree possible. There were some race issues that Blacks were confronted with that were considered positive. Many of these positive race issues emerged from court mandates aimed at reconciling injustices Blacks suffered as a result of racism.

Teachers in this study suggested that countless cases of racism and race issues in both segregated and integrated schools left African American teachers angry but with a profound resolve to cope and act to overcome these problems. Racism caused African American teachers to not only teach their academic subject matter but to also have a strong determination to teach African American students how to survive and succeed in a society that promises little hope for future prosperity. Racism provides a sobering reason for African American teachers to teach life skills and other nonacademic skills so that Blacks might have some hope of overcoming the suffering it causes.

The 11 Black teachers reported that they were often distrustful and suspicious of White teachers and administrators, particularly during the early years of school integration. These teachers also reported that they were usually more unified as a result of racism and work hard to prove that they are worthy of the teaching profession. Fundamental to coping with racism and racial issues is the belief that African American teachers have long understood and known that education was the ticket to improving their quality of life in America. While O'Brien (1999) and Siddle Walker (2001) confirmed this

belief, the 11retired teachers that participated in this study equally confirmed it as well with their stories. Perhaps Foster (1997) substantiated by saying:

> Well regarded and respected, these black teachers understood both the power and danger associated with literacy. Leroy Lovelace, a retired high school English teacher, underscores the power of education: "When a people can think critically, they can change things. They are less likely to be taken advantage of and more likely to be able to avoid the traps that others set for us. An uneducated people can be taken advantage of because of their ignorance or naiveté." (Foster, 1997, p. xxiv)

The family histories participants in this study provided and the deplorable economic plight of African Americans in the United States and particularly in Georgia suggest that many Black teachers came from economically deprived families. Siddle Walker (2001) made this point clear in her study. But for very few exceptions, African Americans usually hold low paying jobs and are at or near the bottom of the economic totem pole. As such, Blacks, including Black teachers historically must cope with economic adversity. African Americans teachers, like their families and friends in the Black community often cope with economic adversity by simply doing without or improvising. These were and still are the tools of survival for Blacks.

Mrs. Smith said when interviewed that when money "ran out," (Shelton, 2004, p. 421) families did without. Mrs. Lumpkin said in her interview that when food supplies were low, families pooled resources and shared with each other. Before schools integrated, Black parents and teachers took old school books being discarded from White schools and by White individuals and used

them, sometimes rewriting pages found in one book but missing in another. Teachers were great at improvising and often survived by providing resources made from any materials they could find or recycle.

The teachers in this study suggested that racism in and of itself instituted a caste system throughout the south. Their stories reported that social subclasses existed to some extent even within races, both Black and White. Whites are separated into social subclasses stratified according to property, wealth, bloodline, and profession. African Americans are segregated based on color or race alone, regardless of other variables. According to Fisher, African American teachers who have long been the most respected and revered members of the African American community are no exception for racist Whites, they are "niggers" too (Shelton, 2004, p. 374).

The Participants said that there were many instances of class or social grouping even among Blacks, particularly as it relates to skin complexion and the texture of one's hair. In some cases, Black teachers favor lighter complexion African American students with thin lips or individuals with "White physical features." Individuals having a dark complexion, thick lips, and kinky hair are many times not given consideration for "out front" positions such as the queen of the school (Foster, 1997). Mrs. Fisher stated, as do others, that Blacks, as a race of people are brained-washed to think that Black features are as beautiful as White features. However, she believes that African Americans that are in the so-called "top echelon" within the Black community

do not to a great extent isolate themselves from the more general Black community.

African American teachers coped with economic adversity by sacrificing time, money, and talents. Mrs. Hall and Mrs. Parker said that Black teachers felt a sense of duty to help lift the social and economic status of African American students and often used their own (out-of-pocket) money to purchase much needed school materials that would be utilized for classroom and instructional purposes. Each of the 11 teachers in this study attested to this caring and giving attitude toward their students. Gilligan (1981) found that African American teachers felt a profound obligation to serve their communities as resource individuals who were caring and concerned about the welfare of the children and their families (Gilligan, 1981). They said that Black teachers also purchased food, school lunches, clothing, and other basic items so that Black students would not be hungry and so that these children had the basic necessities required to meet minimal standards for survival in public schools.

A clear indication of how African American teachers coped with economic adversity is disclosed as Mrs. Parker, Mrs. Scott, Mr. Isom, Mrs. Fisher, and other the other teachers in this study provided strong statements regarding African American teachers' spirit of giving money, time, and other resources as a coping mechanism for overcoming economic deficiencies. These coping skills were also found in research conducted by Foster (1997) and

Siddle Walker (2001) whose studies provided additional information supporting the strategy that Black teachers used for coping with economic adversity. Additional data exist in other studies (Dozier, 1975; Hannan, 1975; King, 1975; Mack, 1975).

The effects of racism and race issues Black teachers suffered between 1930 and 1970 were profound. The teachers indicated that racism caused Blacks to have low self-esteem, suffer economic disparity, and continued feelings of hopelessness. I know this to be true from my life experience while growing up in Georgia. Outwardly, teachers understood that the struggle of fighting racism had to press forward in a humble and honorable manner in order to improve the plight of Blacks, yet inwardly they were angry and confused about why racism existed so prevalently against Black people even after the abolition of slavery. Siddle Walker (2001) addressed this outward-inward struggle that Blacks continue to face.

4. *Philosophy of Teaching*

Foster (1997) and Siddle Walker (1996) suggested that understanding African American teaching in the context of its external circumstances provides only a partial view of the behavior and beliefs of Black teachers. The research these exceptional scholars offered lends support to the perspectives of the teachers in this study by asserting that if one only looks at African American teachers in the traditional role of teaching children and serving as good stewards within the Black community, one might indeed miss another

important and prevailing point about these teachers. That is, African American teachers understood that teaching is a profession and they knew that they were professionals.

Professional jobs were very limited for Blacks up until about 1950. Before that time, rarely were African Americans venturing into a wide range of professional jobs. Mr. Isom, Mrs. Parker, and others involved in this research reported that historically, African Americans were for the most part limited as professionals to being a preacher, insurance agent, or a schoolteacher. Teaching required the most education and was considered by many as the highest profession among the three because many feel preachers, though very well respected, are called for their work by God and not required to have as much formal education as teachers. Mrs. Fisher stated in her interview, "Teachers in those days had to be good citizens…and when you recognized a teacher or a preacher or an insurance agent, those were your idols…those were the professions that we as Blacks could have, the greatest professions" (Shelton, 2004, p. 345).

Black teachers are members of professional organizations associated with education and teaching and are proud to be members of the teaching profession. Mr. Ford stated in his interview:

> All Blacks were asked to join the professional organization when they were hired. And from that indication it appeared that we had pride because that's the first thing we did when we got hired… I think that was a plus for us, the professional organizations

doctor" (Shelton, 2004, p. 260). Some research scholars also found that African American teachers had their own national professional organizations with state affiliate chapters and the organizations kept additional details about the professional activities of African American teachers (Patterson, 1981; Picott, 1975; Porter & Neyland, 1977; Potts, 1978; Siddle Walker, 2001). Siddle Walker (2001) also offered the self-reports as evidence of African American teachers' beliefs about teaching as a profession. These reports are a compilation of minutes, notes, and other reports from the American Teachers Association (ATA), which was known prior to 1939 as the National Association of Teachers in Colored Schools and the GTEA. These self-reports are located in a series of NEA-published books that record the history of the African American teachers' state professional associations (Siddle Walker, 2001).

5. *Teacher Training*

According to a study by Fultz (1995), African American teacher-preparation lagged behind that of White teachers for decades. However, Foster (1997) and Siddle Walker (2001) are two scholars who have emerged as the leading researchers on African American teachers and found that Black teachers made up ground by 1950, and often surpassed White teachers in terms of professional certifications and average years of college. Participants in this study have mixed feeling about whether White teachers were better prepared than African American teachers. In fact, they argue that this was not always the

case. They assert that African American teachers in Georgia received excellent teacher-preparation training from private and state run segregated African American colleges and universities.

A study conducted by DuBois (1901) reported in the Atlanta University Publications (1969) suggested that African American teachers 20 years previous were better prepared than their White counterparts. DuBois argued that White teacher preparation surpassed that of Blacks around the turn of the twentieth century due to the high frequency of scholarships they received and the fact that White teachers were offered better salaries than Black teachers. These practices of inequity in educational opportunities between Black and White teachers were racially motivated (Atlanta University Publications, 1969). Teachers in this study said in instances where African American teachers did not receive teacher-preparation comparable to their White counterparts, the preparation deficit was due to conditions caused by racism. Atlanta University Publications, (1968) and Siddle Walker, (2001) reported similar findings. Perkins (1989) offered similar details that said that disproportionate opportunity for African Americans to attend well equipped schools, and to attend public school at the same rate as Whites was the root cause of Black teacher deficiencies and quite prevalent at the turn of the twentieth century. DuBois addressed this deficiency in his second report on the Negro common school in 1911 (Atlanta University Publications, 1968; Perkins, 1989; Siddle Walker, 2001).

However, teachers in my study were proud of their segregated Black schools, which certainly offered less than adequate facilities. These schools did not discourage the positive philosophy and importance African Americans teachers and parents placed on teacher-preparation and quality education for their children. Blacks in Georgia were confronted with many racial barriers but they continued to pursue public education in Georgia and many of them attained high achievements and became noted public and private figures as a result of their public education. Historical studies suggest that African American teachers were inadequately trained and suffered from poor teacher-preparation, poor pedagogical skills, and assert that African American teachers were not qualified to teach Whites (Bullock, 1967). The teachers in my study argue that while their schools were certainly not equal to White schools in educational resources and that their school building were not up to par with White school buildings, they saw themselves as well trained and possessing good pedagogical skills.

According to Rogers (1967) by 1950 African American teachers averaged 4.1 years of college while White teachers averaged 3.8 years of college nationwide. Siddle Walker (2001) found that by 1949-1950, African American teacher-preparation had surpassed that of White teachers in terms of years of formal training. These findings supported the position that participants in this study hold regarding African American teacher-preparation. Ashmore (1954) also found that by 1952 African American teacher-preparation in

Georgia averaged more years of college than their White peers. Siddle Walker (2001) reported that although it is seldom acknowledged in contemporary discussions, it is no longer a disputed historical fact that African American teachers in many states were better trained than White teachers. Further evidence of the importance of teacher-preparation for African American teachers is exhibited through the dominant theme referenced by African American teachers' professional associations—the need to raise qualifications of teachers and to obtain adequate salaries for them (Siddle Walker, 2001).

Whether African American teachers lagged behind White teachers or not, the participants in this study were unfluctuating in their belief that teacher-preparation was extremely important and that it was inextricably linked to the quality of education one received. Speaking of African American teachers Mr. Rogers stated in his interview, "We must be informed that there were good teachers who were concerned and we had some teachers who just didn't care" (Shelton, 2004, p. 242). The teachers that participated in this study believe that collectively African American teachers firmly believe in teacher-preparation and excellence in teaching. These teachers suggested that Black teachers who took exception to this belief were indeed a small group of teachers. These beliefs are in direct opposition to a common myth among many Whites that Black teachers are not good teachers and are rarely adequately prepared to teach their assigned classes.

Participants in this study believed that where quality might have been lacking in segregated Black schools it was due primarily to conditions caused by the separate-but-equal laws that dominated a racist society. The 11 African American teachers in my study were acutely aware of the idea of separate-but-equal law and considered it a barrier to both teacher-preparation and quality of education for Black teachers and students. Foster (1997), Bullock (1967), and O'Brien (1999) supported this argument regarding awareness of African American teachers. Teachers participating in this study claim that Black teachers in segregated schools had to have the same qualifications or higher as White teachers before they could be hired. They added that aside from being equally qualified as their White counterparts they did not receive equal pay. Foster (1997) also addressed this dual pay scale that existed in Georgia and other southern states.

The problem of educating African American masses remained well into the twentieth century. The prevailing question by the White establishment in Georgia was what kind of education should be provided for African Americans? Participants in this study affirmed as attested in the literature that African Americans have always desired more than "Negro education" (Bullock, 1967, p. 147), a low level education tailored to allow Blacks just enough education to only perform menial tasks and manual labor. According to Bullock (1967) African Americans desire an education equal to Whites and believe that African American teachers should be very well prepared to teach

and provide African American students with a quality education (Bullock, 1967). Even in dilapidated schools with limited resources African American teachers, to the extent that they were capable, held high standards of quality for their students. Participants in this study expressed that African American teachers had to be innovative and improvised in their classrooms to accomplish teaching and learning goals. Even under adverse conditions, Foster (1997) found that Black teachers often provided magical classrooms for poor African American children and demanded quality.

Participants in this study said that they did not experience African American teachers in great numbers who lacked in pedagogical skills. This is quite a contradiction to the traditional literature, which usually yields unfavorable reports or at least reports to the contrary about African American teachers. Foster (1997) and Siddle Walker (2001) also reported this contradiction in their studies. Participants report that cases where African American teachers did not perform excellently in the classroom were very rare.

Mrs. Parker, Mrs. Fisher, Mrs. Hall, and the other participants in this study spoke of the fact that often African American teachers sought advanced degrees and certifications, and often returned to continue schooling and obtain more education year after year to ensure adequate preparedness to teach. Mrs. Haines stated, "Now, we were encouraged to take classes in the summer when we could" (Shelton, 2004, p. 330). Mr. Isom commented about the importance of a quality education, "I did a thorough job in teaching because I wanted them

to understand what I was doing" (Shelton, 2004, p. 315). Mrs. Lumpkin believed, "our Black teachers in general received an excellent education and one that usually prepared them to become excellent educators" (Shelton, 2004, p. 263). Testimonials such as these provided a clear indication of the philosophy that these 11 African American teachers held regarding teacher-preparation and the importance of quality education. These teachers were saying that African American teachers believed that quality education is very important and principals should hire teachers who are very well qualified and certified. These teachers told a story of how they continued their education by returning to colleges and universities summer after summer seeking advanced degrees and certifications in various teaching areas as evidence that African American teachers were convinced that teacher-preparation was extremely important. These teachers took the teaching profession seriously and understood the importance of providing a quality education for African American students.

Mr. Ford stated in his interview, "I believe the education I got from my college really prepared me to be a good teacher. I was serious about it and I put my life in it. Many times in my career I found that I was a counselor as well as a teacher; that was part of your job in the Black community" (Shelton, 2004, p. 301). A key factor common between the stories participants told was "teacher dedication." Participants shared the same opinion about African American teachers' dedication to the teaching profession in general and made statements

such as, "They were dedicated, and they were there for you. They cared about your welfare, and your character, and they expressed citizenship, and your future" (Shelton, 2004, p. 345).

The 11 teachers in this study believe that African American teachers in general want to be excellent teachers. They seek to be very well trained and prepared professionals capable of providing the very best education to all children they taught. The African American teachers I spent time with spoke of how Dr. Horace Tate and the GTEA constantly encouraged African American teachers to take workshops, seminars, attend special summer training programs, pursue state certifications, and pursue advanced degrees. Support for this fact is found in Siddle Walker's (2001) study on *African American Teaching in the South: 1940-1960.*

Finally, a very significant point emerging from this study and worthy of noting is the contention that there is no single common preparation canon that existed during the era which schools were segregated. This perspective held by the 11 African American teachers in my study counters the myth held by many Whites that African American teachers had one form of preparation and that they were poorly trained. Siddle Walker (2001) addressed this issue and offered evidence to counter this myth. Participants in this study revealed multiple training opportunities that African American teachers availed themselves to in order to ensure adequate teacher-preparation and provide quality education to all students. Hall, Haines, Fisher, and other participants

associated with this study suggested that African American teachers used a variety of classroom teaching techniques.

6. *Historical Myths*

The traditional but very limited and fragmented historical accounts of African American teachers prior to school integration did not view African American teachers as professionals. Rather, they were seen as struggling, poorly educated, oppressed missionary figures that helped Black students maintain behavior and who helped as best they could with racial uplift (Siddle Walker, 2001). The 11 African American teachers' in this study and in the Oral History accounts of African American teachers that Siddle Walker (2001) spoke of were in direct opposition to such negative traditional history regarding this matter.

Although within the context of separate but equal, many of the negative statements about African teachers and their schools were true. African American teachers struggled greatly during the segregated school years and in fact had to do more with less. In some segregated schools African Americans were poorly educated in some instances and certainly oppressed by the White establishment. However, participants in this study suggested that African American teachers believed that they possessed great ability to relate and teach African American children. They believed that they could prevail over these objectionable conditions and that such conditions were temporary obstructions that could be conquered with hard work and persistence. These Black teachers

believed in their ability to educate Black children and improve conditions in the communities where they lived and taught.

The 11 teachers in this study said that African American teachers often endured and conquered obstacles that confronted them as teachers and that their abilities to teach were equal to and better in many cases than their White counterparts. The predominant perspective held by participants in this study was that not only are African American teachers' ability to teach equal to White teachers' abilities but the pedagogical styles used by Black teachers was as equally effective at getting students to learn what was taught.

There is a common and equally erroneous myth perpetuated in the South that African Americans fought for schools to integrate because Blacks could not provide an adequate or quality education for Black children and could not provide adequate educational leadership in segregated Black schools (Foster, 1997). The findings in this research suggested that this myth is indeed not true. Participants in this study triangulated a different and logical reason for African Americans pressing for school desegregation. They argued that the true reason behind the African American struggle for school desegregation was to gain equal access to resources and education that Whites had always been afforded. African Americans understood that as long as schools were segregated Blacks would never experience social equality and achieve the economic benefits that Whites had taken as a natural privilege. Foster's seminal work validated this perspective and greatly delineated this argument (Foster, 1997). Participants in

this study claimed that superior Black teachers who taught them were dedicated to the teaching profession. That dedication along with the high frequency level of continuing education, workshops, and summer training programs were tools that sharpened Black teachers ability to teach. The powerful desire to uplift the deplorable social and economic conditions of African Americans as well as the close relationship often established with students and the community provided the inspiration needed for African American teachers to perform with excellence in teaching.

The teachers in my study maintained that African American teachers possessed a unique ability to "size-up" the children they taught. In this regard, Mrs. Fisher stated:

> You have got brilliant Black kids, you have got brilliant White kids, and you have middle of the road Black kids and middle of the road White kids. You have low achieving Black kids and low achieving White kids. So I look at my children's age level, their ability, and what they can comprehend. I teach a child as a child. Teach the whole child regardless of looking at the color of your skin because that doesn't mean a thing. (Shelton, 2004, p. 358)

Here, Mrs. Fisher was saying that African American teachers analyzed the children and the particular teaching situation in which teachers were involved and that they had the ability to be flexible, and teach children effectively regardless of race. Mrs. Fisher continued her position on the ability of African American teachers by stating:

> And I just had that much talent and ability to help those kids attain where they should be…you get in there and you do your job. You feel proud about it because you have a talent, you have

> ability and you can do, and you can see learning taking place. You can see children enjoying learning and being in a place where they want to learn…that's what is still happening. (Shelton, 2004, p. 374)

These 11 teachers had great confidence in their ability to teach Black and White children and they believe that Black teachers still have the ability to effectively teach. However, these teachers made known that as a result of both Black and White teachers becoming somewhat more cautious in their approach to children after school desegregation it is fair to acknowledge that in this regard some African American teachers indeed changed teaching style and limited some of the teaching strategies commonly used when teaching only Black children.

These teachers believed strongly that all children could learn and these teachers had high expectations for the children being taught. They taught with the expectation of making children believe they could learn (Foster, 1997; Davis, 1996). Black teachers in this study believed that their ability to teach Black children was greater than White teachers' abilities. They believed that, historically, Black teachers had gone beyond the call of duty to provide the highest quality of education for Black students because the teachers knew that a Black student would have to do twice as much as a White student in order to get ahead. Participants provided as evidence to support this belief the numerous times White teachers approached Black teachers to learn "how to teach such that Black students will understand."

Although these African American teachers cared deeply for students they taught and possessed a nurturing attitude, they did not tolerate improper behavior on the part of students. They said that, African American teachers generally are strict disciplinarians. They believed that Black teachers made strict demands regarding behavior and students had to follow teachers' rules. Spencer (1975) documented this caring but no nonsense attitude displayed by Black teachers in segregated Black schools.

As an indication of the ability of African American teachers being effective teachers the participants offered the fact that they did not have to make any special preparations or attend any special workshops in masses in order to teach in integrated school. When desegregation took place in Georgia, these teachers did not teach White children any differently than Black children had been taught. These teachers said that they know how to evaluating Black children and determine their emotional needs and desires, and then helping them. Teachers in this study attributed this fact to their ability to size-up [analyze] students then effectively teach them.

The participants in this study held the position that Black teachers taught to get things across to Black children in ways that many White teachers failed to use. Participants asserted that one has to learn the child's style because while all children can learn but they don't all learn the same way. Foster (1997) attested to this belief in her seminal study. Mr. Isom stated, "I don't teach a subject, I teach the student. What ever it takes, I incorporate it in

my presentation" (Shelton, 2004, p. 322). Again, these 11 teachers were saying that teaching methods must contain great flexibility in order to reach the student.

The claim that African American teachers possessed excellent teaching ability does not in any way lessen the ability of White teachers as effective teachers of White students, and in many cases, Black students as well. Participants claimed that it is truly a myth that White teachers are better teachers than Black teachers. They reported that this statement was simply not true. Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Parker, Mrs. Haines and other participants said that there were excellent White teachers and excellent Black teachers. The teachers in this study believed some White teachers were "just making a salary." Mr. Rogers admitted that this was true for some Black teachers too. The dominant African American teachers' perspective regarding the ability of White teachers was that it is not true that White teachers were better than Black teachers as far as excellence in teaching is concerned. The common belief among these African American teachers was that White teachers had more access to better materials to help them in the classroom while Black teachers have historically not had the same opportunity

The African American teachers in this study believed that while most White teachers possessed excellent teaching ability, ability alone did not improve education for African American students. Black teachers believed that the overall environment in integrated schools where Blacks had access to more

and better teaching resources was more of a contributing factor to Black students improving as opposed to White teachers' teaching ability. African American teachers' perspectives on White teachers' ability to teach versus Black teachers' ability to teach might be summed up by the belief in a statement Mrs. Clara Hall made during her interview. Mrs. Hall stated:

> Now you have some lazy Black teachers just like you have some lazy White teachers. Now if it's in you not to do anything you're just not going to do it. But across the board there were excellent White teachers and excellent Black teachers. (Shelton, 2004, p. 184)

7. *Family Support*

African American teachers emerged from a diverse and wide range of families having many different social and economic backgrounds. There were many circumstances and individuals that inspired these 11 individuals to become teachers. There were literally hundreds of individuals, situations, and circumstances that inspired African Americans in general, to enter the teaching profession. Historically, African Americans who aspired to seek formal education and become teachers received support from varied sources. This whole process of African Americans being formally educated can be traced back to the era of the Negro slave, even before the Emancipation Proclamation became final on January 1, 1863. White sympathetic Northerners, a number of philanthropists, and rich businessmen provided money and constant encouragement for African Americans to educate themselves (Anderson, 1988; Bullock, 1967).

Across the cases of the teachers in this study, they said that those who were the greatest source of inspiration and support for them could be placed into two categories: (a) family, and (b) former teachers. The greatest inspiration for Blacks becoming teachers came from their families, regardless of economic or social status. These African American teachers reported that their immediate family members pushed education. Grandparents, fathers, mothers, uncles, and aunts stressed the importance of education upon those who became teachers.

Participants told stories informing that as far back as they could recall, to a larger extent, Black parents and guardians virtually demanded that children go to school and get a good education. They said that their parents knew that education was the best hope for Black children to have a better life than older Blacks had already experienced. Of course, in Georgia African Americans were extremely limited in their professional choices and among the more noble and respected professions available for Blacks to pursue was the teaching profession. The teachers in this study agreed that professional careers were very limited for African Americans. Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Fisher reported that it was always acceptable among Whites for Black men to be preachers but very few opportunities existed for African Americans to pursue professions as physicians, lawyers, or engineers. African American females could become nurses, which was often an extension of working in the White man's home and essentially providing care for the sick. Foster (1997) provided research that

supports such limits placed on African Americans seeking professional careers and asserted that such limitations existed at the time of the Emancipation Proclamation and continued to exist through the first sixty years of the twentieth century.

Participants of this study expressed how their parents not only pushed education for children, but how hard Blacks worked and sacrificed in order for children to get an education with the hopes that they would one day become teachers. Some African American teachers had family members who were teachers and these teachers inspired and supported other young African Americans to become teachers. After all, according to the 11 teachers in my study, teachers were looked upon as special people, very well respected and the pride of the Black community.

African American teachers comprised the second category of individuals that served as the greatest source of support and inspiration for others to become teachers. According to the teachers that participated in this study, most African American teachers had former teachers that they looked up to as role models, and in whom they had great admiration and respect. The 11 teachers proclaimed a common statement repeated by many Black students made statements about how they wanted to be like their teacher when they grew up. Black teachers certainly inspired other Blacks to continue the pursuit of education and become teachers. As the interviews in this study progressed a common declaration among participants was, "I was inspired by my teachers to

go into the field of education." Participants in this study asserted that outside of families, their teachers and other teachers had the greatest influence on young African American children and many times these teachers formed indelible images of what children wanted to become as adults. Meier, et al. (1989) provided similar accounts in their work as did Foster (1997) and Siddle Walker (2001).

8. *Segregation*

The historical chapter provided the account of how segregated schools were lawfully operating in Georgia until *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) struck down the laws of school segregation. According to Foster (1997) state law required that public schools in Georgia be segregated—a condition that lasted through the first six decades of the twentieth century. During that era of school segregation in Georgia public schools functioned under the separate-but-equal rule. Research conducted by West (1972), offered a shocking example of the racial politics interwoven deeply into the fabric of education in Georgia in the year 1919, as reported in his book titled, *The Black American and Education*. In 1919, the Statutes of Georgia, Part I, Title 6, article VIII, Sections 84 and 110, included the follow:

> ...It shall also be the duty of said Board of Education to make arrangements for the instruction of the children of the white and colored races in separate schools. They shall as far as practicable provide the same facilities for both races in respect to attainments and abilities of teachers and for a minimum of six months length of term time; but the children of white and colored races shall not be taught together in any common or public school of this

> state…Colored and white children shall not attend the same school; and no teacher receiving or teaching white and colored pupils at the same school shall be allowed any compensation at all out of the common school fund. (West, 1972, p. 155, 156)

Current literature argues that public schooling in Georgia was separate and very much unequal prior to the mid 1960s (Bullock, 1967; Foster, 1997; O'Brien, 1999; Siddle Walker, 2001). Based on the historical data reported in this study, the historical facts are that segregated Black schools in Georgia were not up to par with White schools. According to participants in this study, more often than not, particularly prior to 1960, Black schools were under-funded, in poor physical conditions, limited in teaching supplies and tools, and supplied with an inadequate number of ragged, hand-me-down used textbooks from White schools. The inadequate number of good textbooks was a major problem in segregated Black schools. This seemed to be the focal point of shortages caused by racism and segregated schools, and one of the problems that angered African American teachers the most.

Although participants agreed that conditions in segregated Black schools were less than desirable and indeed not up to par with White schools, they applauded the abilities of African American teachers to improvise, be resourceful, and use innovative approaches to teaching when adequate teaching materials were lacking. These participants argued that if segregated Black schools produced some of the best physicians, nurses, professors, attorneys, teachers, politicians, and other professionals in America, then the teachers who

taught these students could not have been too poorly prepared or extremely lacking good teaching skills. The teachers in my study agreed that many things were not provided for segregated schools but Black teachers worked extremely hard to overcome limited resources.

Mrs. Smith reported, "I think the Black schools were very good schools. I think students were promoted, prompted, inspired, encouraged, and pushed—anything to encourage you more" (Shelton, 2004, p. 227). The atmosphere in segregated Black schools was one in which teachers nurtured students, created a caring environment, and got to know every student on a personal level. These teachers reported that in segregated schools African American teachers complimented academic teaching by stressing such things as having a wholesome character and high self-esteem, and expressed interest in the welfare of students. Teachers in these schools took on the role of surrogate parents and saw to the personal needs of students.

Teachers in this study said that there were discipline problems in Black segregated schools, but teachers with the support of parents usually resolved them. They said that during the era of segregated schools, teachers had authority to whip or spank children and they did. Prior to desegregation, even discipline issues that involved violence did not involve violent weapons. Before schools integrated, Black teachers were generally strict regarding student behavior. As Mrs. Hall and Mrs. Parker point out, at the beginning of the school term, teachers usually set forth rules for students to follow and those

concern for students' academic and social successes existed among most Black teachers.

African American teachers reported that in addition to their concerns about the care and welfare of students, teachers were always very much concerned about losing their jobs and the pitiful and destitute conditions in which teaching took place. Black teachers taught in these deplorable conditions while receiving less pay than White teachers who were doing the same job under more desirable conditions (Davis, 1996; Foster, 1997; Siddle Walker, 2001). However, Mrs. Parker and Mrs. Fisher, Mrs. Scott, and some of the others reported that some segregated Black schools were not in a dilapidated state. Some Black segregated schools had very good facilities and fared better than others. They reported that in some counties local boards of education saw to it that Black schools had good curriculums and were fairly maintained. Examples of such schools include Moultrie High School for Negro Youth, which was the Black high school in Moultrie, Georgia, cited in Mrs. Lumpkin's interview. Another was Rome Colored High School located in Rome, Georgia, cited in Mrs. Fisher's interview, and the Black high school located in Eatonton, Georgia, which was also cited in Mrs. Lumpkin's interview. It should be noted that these were segregated Black schools that were cited as good schools, yet they did not have books and other educational supplies equal to the local White schools.

The participants in this story reported that in segregated Black schools where they worked, the relationship that existed among teachers and the principal was one in which the teacher could receive supervision in a number of areas including advice for teaching improvement, curricular direction, and at times advice regarding personal issues. Teachers helped one another in Black schools. In particularly, older or veteran teachers usually encouraged or mentored younger and less experienced teachers. This amiable informal relationship that the participants spoke of in my study was supported by similar finding in Foster (1997) and Siddle Walker (1996), whose studies found that informal support from older veteran teachers seemed natural because those teachers felt a sense of pride when young Black teachers entered the field of teaching (Foster, 1997; Siddle Walker, 1996).

Additionally, participants claimed Jeanes teachers played a vital role in segregated Black schools. Bullock (1967) provides a detailed account of Jeanes teachers in Georgia. These experienced teachers served as a liaison between the local superintendent's office and schools and they provided instructional and material resources for Black teachers. However, the participants in my study affirmed that Black principals usually served as a supervisor and leader for the school. Some African American teachers claimed that in Black schools principals from time to time were difficult to relate to because these principals functioned at the mercy of White superintendents and had to protect their jobs. As a result, principals' loyalties were sometimes split between genuinely

taking care of faculty or serving the desires of White superintendents who usually favored White schools and often disregarded or undermined Black schools. Mr. Rogers believed that Black principals were too strict as bosses.

Integrated public schools in Georgia were brought about as a result of court mandates and not because the masses of White people wanted to attend schools with African American students and teachers. The 11 participants in this study said that when schools first integrated Whites did not want to attend schools with Blacks and White teachers did not want to teach Black children. In communities where a particular school had to close in order to achieve integration, usually school and local officials would close a Black school. Mrs. Fisher said that very often in integrated schools where White teachers did not want to teach Black students, they would obtain the approval of the administration and then minimize the number of Black students being taught by introducing various grouping tactics such as academic tracking methods. Mrs. Fisher called this process "weeding out Blacks" (Shelton, 2004, p. 355). Participants claim that school segregation continues to exist within integrated schools and to this day many schools in Georgia remain segregated.

According to the teachers in my study, private schools and "White flight" have long been veils that Whites used to hide and maintain segregated schools or at least slow down the desegregation process. Whites usually relocated in remote neighborhoods so that White children could attend a particular more segregated or private school. The cumulative effect of massive

relocation by Whites into isolated neighborhoods usually undermined the desegregation process and clustered White students together causing segregated schools to imperceptibly reemerge. Mrs. Hall and the other participants suggested that in integrated schools the principal's attitude reflected the tone for the relationship between White teachers and Black teachers.

Early in the process of school integration in some integrated schools White and Black teachers maintained good working relationships, yet there were occurrences where White teachers simply did not like Black people whether they were teachers or not. These so called "rednecks," according to Mrs. Fisher, did not associate with Black teachers and did not want to teach Black students. The teachers believe that most overt racial overtures between White and Black teachers occurred early in the school desegregation process but have subsided greatly in recent years.

Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Parker, and the other teachers in this study admitted that during the early years of desegregated schools in Georgia (which I have characterized as being between 1962 and 1970, based on the time the schools started desegregating in Georgia), many African American teachers felt isolated because they came from school environments in which African American teachers maintained close ties of liking, based on trust, and support for each other. These teachers said that in desegregated schools, African American teachers were hesitant to trust White teachers and did not feel that

White teachers were supportive of them. This feeling of lack of support by White teachers that Black teachers expressed left African American teachers feeling stressed, constricted, and disadvantaged. They reported that early in the desegregation process, Black teachers were not considered for leadership positions, and in segregated schools they never received accolades where teacher voting determined the recipient or honoree. Mrs. Fisher recounted that not only did White teachers outnumber Black teachers in matters where voting determined the outcome but White teachers simply believed Black teachers were not good enough to receive various awards or honors. Mrs. Fisher said, in particular, Whites felt Black teachers were not good enough to be voted teacher of the year.

Mrs. Parker, Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Haines, Mrs. Tarrence, and the other teachers in my study said that when African American teachers moved to predominately White desegregated schools that they did not change teaching styles, however, they admit that many Black teachers became somewhat more cautious about how they taught in the sense that the need existed to convince Whites that Black teachers knew how to teach and manage the affairs associated with the teaching process. Participants in this study said that desegregated schools helped African Americans only in the sense that Blacks had greater access to teaching supplies and educational resources that were not available in segregated Black schools. According to participants in this research, prior to desegregating schools, African Americans received excellent

education in many segregated schools. Yet, Black teachers understood that things could have been much better. This condition, according to Mrs. Smith and the other teachers caused Black teachers and parents to be bitterly unhappy about the shortages that persistently plagued their schools. Foster (1997) expressed similar findings that support this statement. These teachers reported that after school desegregation African American students had equal access to the same educational tools and materials available to White children.

The participants said that in spite of the advantages integrated schools created for African Americans; there were losses that incurred as well. The increased tension and rigid environment of being on the alert due to the watchful eyes of administrators and White teachers caused African American teachers to be uncomfortable. While school integration provided welcomed resources and improved physical facilities for African American students and teachers, it did not provide totally favorable conditions for either. African American students suffer certain losses as a result of school desegregation. Mr. Isom and Mrs. Parker said that Black students were more policed than White students and were often unfairly and more harshly disciplined for situations in which they were involved, that require teachers and principals to take some type of corrective action. Mr. Isom said that Black students were more likely to be expelled or expunged from school than White students who were involved in similar actions or who had conducted themselves in a similar manner.

Teachers said that White teachers often had low expectations of Black students.

The teachers in this study stated that Black students were usually grouped into low-level classes and rarely recognized for personal achievement. This caused many Black students to lose pride have low self-esteem. The 11 teachers said that the close parent-like relationship that once existed between African American teachers and Black students was lost as a result of school integration. Participants agreed with Foster (1997) that White students were often prejudiced against Black students. They expressed wide spread incidences of racial discrimination in extracurricular and social activities. The teachers in my study said that even after school integration, segregated senior proms and other segregated student activities continued to exist.

Meier, et al. (1989) reported that even after school integration many schools in Georgia continued to hold segregated senior proms or proms where invitations were required but no Blacks were invited. These scholars also reported other accounts of racism in schools that caused African American students to suffer. Participants in this study claimed these accounts of racism to be true. In predominately White integrated schools African American students found that they were not always cordially received in many school clubs and activities, except for varsity football where Black supper athletes often meant victory for the school's team. Participants provided stories about how Black children stopped trying; thinking White teachers had to pass them. According

to Mrs. Hall, Mr. Ford and the other teachers that participated in this study both Black and White teachers became very guarded and had to watch how they spoke because they were fearful of offending the other race.

Mr. Isom pointed out that as a result of feelings of isolation, loss of pleasantries that existed among faculty members in segregated Black schools, changes in disciplinary procedures, and pedagogical limitations that were dividing Black teachers and Black students, many African American teachers did not feel good about school desegregation. The 11 teachers in my study believed that they were better teachers of African American students and feared White teachers may not taking the time to understand the culture of Black students or that they were not sincerely addressing the needs of Black students. The 11 teachers I interviewed maintained that integrated schools improved education for Blacks in some instances, but on the other hand, the negatives experiences that Blacks associated with integrated schools have been an extremely expensive price to pay. Mr. Isom raised the question, "When some African American teachers and other members of the African American community add up the cost of school desegregation, the overriding questions is whether or not it was worth it?" (Shelton, 2004, p. 323)

Addressing the Research Questions

1. What were the affects of racism that Black teachers experienced during the forty-year period immediately prior to 1970?

Participants in this study confirmed that racism influenced the emotions and behavior of African American teachers. These teachers experienced anger and distrust toward what they saw and understood to be acts of racism. The teachers indicated that many times racism resulted in their having to deal with Black students who possessed low self-esteem, faced economic disparity, and suffered continued feelings of hopelessness. Outwardly, teachers understood that the struggle against racism had to press forward in a humble but resolute manner in order to improve the plight of Blacks, yet inwardly they were angry and confused about why racism existed so prevalently against Black people.

2. What were the greatest concerns and special challenges, if any, Black teachers faced and how did they deal with them?

Before school desegregation the greatest concern that African American teachers faced was lack of teaching materials. They did not have access to materials they considered to be necessary for high quality teaching and learning experiences. The teachers in this study said that among the shortage of teaching materials, they were most concerned about the lack of textbooks and the conditions of the limited books that were available to them. Teachers were very much concerned about keeping children in school. They also expressed considerable concern about general poor conditions in which they had to teach, such as, dilapidated buildings often poorly furnished and without adequate heating and cooling.

Teachers dealt with these concerns in multiple ways. First they understood that unity and support from each other was needed. They often shared materials and small supplies with each other. Teachers had to be highly resourceful and innovative. They would buy raw materials or find materials and use them to design or make items to be used in their classrooms for instructional purposes. Sometimes with the assistance of some students, in cases where there was a shortage of books or missing pages in used books, teachers would copy entire pages from books by hand so that all students would have complete textbooks. Teachers also raised money to help repair school buildings and furniture or they assisted community and family members with cleaning and repairs.

After school desegregation, African American teachers were very much concerned about job security and fair treatment among the integrated teaching cadre. Black teachers were always concerned about the personal and social welfare of Black students and the level of nurturing that they received from their teachers. Additionally, after school desegregation Black teachers worked hard by enrolling in continuing education courses and workshops to show that they possessed appropriate teaching skills and credentials in an effort to maintain their jobs and be assured of some level of job security. Many returned to colleges and universities to obtain advanced degrees. Many Black teachers left the teaching profession and found other work as a result of Black schools

being closed and the limited slots available for Black teachers after desegregation.

3. What were schools like before and after school integration?

Black segregated schools regardless of their physical condition were usually (aside from the church) the hub of the Black community. Like today, before desegregation schools were used for a number of community activities. Teachers in this study indicated that segregated Black schools in Georgia were not up to par with White schools. Black schools were under-funded, in poor physical condition, limited in teaching supplies and tools, and had an inadequate number of ragged, hand-me-down used textbooks from White schools.

However, the 11 retired African American teachers interviewed in this study summarized the programmatic structure of Black School by saying that Black schools were very good schools. Students were promoted, prompted, inspired, encouraged, and pushed to excel. The atmosphere in segregated Black schools was one in which teachers nurtured students, created a caring environment, and got to know every student on a personal level. Teachers in the segregated Black schools took on the role of surrogate parents and saw to the personal needs of students. Yet, in these schools teachers were stern disciplinarians with the authority to whip or spank children.

After school integration the comfort level for Black teachers was greatly diminished. White teachers outnumbered Black teachers and the overall environment of cordiality among teachers disappeared for African American teachers. Black teachers found themselves in a rigid school atmosphere that left them feeling isolated and uncomfortable. They no longer felt the close ties based on trust and support between teachers and administrators. Both races functioned with caution because, in many cases, each was fearful of offending the other race. African American teachers were hesitant to trust White teachers and did not feel that White teachers were supportive of them. Often in desegregated schools, Black teachers experienced what they expressed as a lack of support from White teachers and administrators that caused them to feel stressed, constricted, and disadvantaged. As a result of the increased tension and rigid environmental conditions, Black teachers were hesitant to trust White teachers and White administrators and found themselves constantly on the alert thinking that the White administrators and teachers were watching them. Many times Black teachers perceived that White teachers and particularly White students were prejudiced against them and the Black students.

In desegregated schools Black teachers experienced pedagogical limitations that divided them from Black students. Disciplinary procedures were different in desegregated schools. The overall effect of desegregation was that many African American teachers did not feel good about the desegregated schools. Many Black teachers believed that desegregated schools helped

African Americans only in the sense that Blacks had greater access to teaching supplies and educational resources than were available in segregated Black schools.

4. Was there a unique African American pedagogy and if so, how did it change after school integration?

There was a unique African American pedagogy particularly in terms of its manifested (clearly apparent and understood) philosophy among African American teachers. It was not one-dimensional, rather it was multifaceted in its application to Black students. The African American pedagogy can be described as a *Black-teacher culture*. It is revealed in and through the teachers' presence. It included teachers' presentation of self and authority, teachers' dress and appearance, the ways in which teachers spoke and their unspoken communication, the ways in which they wrote, and the ways in which they interacted with each student (Delpit, 1988).

This particular pedagogy and teaching philosophy was wide spread among Black teachers and built upon a strong sense of caring for and nurturing of students. This nurturing and caring attitude that African American teachers possessed in and out of the classroom formed the basis for a unique teaching style. Fundamental to this nurturing attitude was a strong bond between teacher and student that the teachers in this study and other Black teachers referred to as sharing a surrogate-parent relationship with their students.

According to the teachers in this study Black teachers had a unique teaching style that provided significant success for many African American students. The retired teachers suggested that teaching academic subject matter was very important but that, equally important as classroom teaching, was an urgent need to encourage Black students to be survivors in society and to strive for excellence.

Black teachers believed that they had an inherited duty to develop and cultivate high moral standards, a wholesome character, and a positive self-belief in their students. The unique teaching style that Black teachers used required them to know the student's home conditions and community environment so that the student could be first *sized-up* and then communicated with more effectively according to the student's personal disposition. Yet, Black teachers taught in a manner that made them realize that the expectations held of them were high for both their academic work and for their moral and social development. This pedagogy incorporated a strong teacher commitment to work with students to be certain that they worked to their fullest potential.

After school integration the unique African American teacher pedagogy diminished. The close relationships and contacts that Black teachers had maintained with Black students during the period when schools were segregated were virtually lost. Black teachers did not want to change their teaching style, nonetheless changes did occur as a result of teaching within more rigid and uncomfortable settings where they recognized the need to be

cautious, to not offend other teachers or students and where they feared that they would be fired for any small infraction of school policy.

Addressing the Sub Questions

1. Did status levels based solely on racial make-up exist in education during the period in which the teachers in this study taught?

The literature clearly suggested that the political aims of education were to use it as a means for Whites to foster a type of caste system and maintain social and economic power over African Americans (Ballantine, 1997; Grant & Sleeter, 1986; O'Brien, 1999). The 11 teachers who participated in this study were not able to provide any real evidence of status levels existing in public schools other than those that were based solely on racial make-up. The separate-but-equal racial status existed in public schools in Georgia until the courts struck down school segregation in 1954. Additionally, if status levels existed in public schools that were based on variables other than race, then they were not reported in the literature that was investigated for this study.

However, a number of status levels existed within both segregated and desegregated schools. Teachers in this study said that these status levels occurred within both Black and White races and between the races, and were usually based on social and economic status of students or they were based on academic ability and achievement, not solely on race. Furthermore, these status or class levels existed at the student level and not at the faculty or administrative level.

2. What limitations, if any, did racism impose on Black teachers who either held or desired to hold certain administrative positions in education?

Racism imposed certain limitations on the opportunities for Black teachers to advance or hold certain administrative positions. During the era on which this study focused, African Americans could not hold a Superintendent's position, nor could they be the principal of a predominately White school. Teachers in this study said that for many years after schools integrated, Black teachers could not serve as lead teachers (comparable to department heads) within desegregated schools.

3. How did race impact promotions, salaries, and recognition for excellence in teaching for African American teachers?

In terms of promotions, Blacks were hardly ever promoted to the level of principal at schools that had been all White prior to desegregation. Blacks usually remained principals over schools that were predominately Black prior to desegregation. Many Black principals, however, were removed from their position as principal during desegregation as a result of the large number of Black schools closing. Black teachers in this study overwhelmingly said that teachers were paid a salary in Georgia based on their race. They indicated that Black teachers who had equal credentials and experience to White teachers were paid less than their White counterparts. The teachers' stories corroborated findings in current literature that a dual pay scale based on race existed for Georgia's public school teachers.

Since White teachers outnumbered Black teachers in matters where voting determined the outcome, Black teachers rarely received accolades in desegregated school. Teachers in this study expressed that White teachers simply believed Black teachers were not good enough to receive various awards or honors, and in particular, Whites believed that Black teachers were not good enough to be voted teacher of the year.

4. To what extent did racism or race define the quality of education for Black teachers and students?

Racism in Georgia played a significant role in defining and dictating the quality of education for Black teachers and students. Whites did not support the idea that Blacks receive a quality education. Teachers in this study recounted how they taught in substandard buildings with less than adequate materials and books, and how they often struggled to overcome the gross inequities that existed prior to school desegregation. These conditions, which were perpetrated by racism, strained the quality of education that Blacks received. Recall that the literature clearly suggested that the political aims of education were to use it as a means for Whites to foster a type of caste system and maintain social and economic power over African Americans. "They didn't want us to be able to read so well…We want Blacks to be mannerable, but not get to the point of being self-sufficient" (Siddle Walker, 2001, p. 761). The historical chapter in this dissertation offers the most powerful evidence that racism and racial politics created and defined a substandard type of

education for African Americans and thereby relegated them to menial tasks and heavy labor that were essential to Georgia's agricultural economy (Anderson, 1988).

5. Did Black teachers have to meet the same qualifications as White teachers when teaching Black students as compared to teaching White students?

According to the 11 teachers in this study, Black teachers had to meet the minimal certification requirements since teacher requirements were put in place by the state. The retired teachers said that Black teachers participated in professional development activities and continuing education programs. These teachers said that teacher preparation and professional activities, which included summer workshops held on college campuses, were the guiding principles for employment as a teacher, even prior to school desegregation. Siddle Walker's (2001) findings reflect the statements made by the participants in this study that suggest that a primary goal of the GTEA was to raise teacher qualifications and obtain adequate salaries.

6. How did African American teachers see or evaluate themselves?

The 11 teachers in this dissertation expressed without any reservation that African American teachers considered themselves to be professionals. Most were members of one or more professional education associations. The teachers in this dissertation said that Black teachers took pride in their profession and considered themselves as capable and qualified teachers who

inherited a moral duty to make a difference. They evaluated themselves as professionals who were fulfilling a worthy, noble, and necessary cause.

Conclusion

Racial integration within Georgia's public schools impacts teachers and students in a variety of ways. For many teachers and students the matter of educating White and Black children in the same schools with an integrated teaching staff creates an environment that involves sensitive and complex human issues. Not all teachers and school administrators think alike and consequently, there are many different motives driving the human and programmatic makeup of schools, including where they are located, and how they operate.

Because of the current trends in the characteristics of human populations within city and rural communities, school administrators and teachers cannot afford to overlook the implications of the findings for the primary questions and sub questions in this study. School administrators and teachers must give serious considerations to the eight themes that resulted from the interviews of the 11 retired African American teachers in this study. The research questions and the eight themes sighted here point to a number of significant educational and social issues that schools cannot afford to overlook. The eight themes above could form the core elements for a school of excellence because they point to many key issues that public schools must address in order to create good environment for teaching and learning. If properly addressed in broad term, these eight central themes will provide the basis for schools to build and maintain good human

relations between student-to-student, teacher-to-teacher, and student-to-teacher within the school, as well as excellent teacher training programs, and community support.

Chapter V.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I briefly discuss how this study affords a new and different opportunity for educators and non-educators to view African American teachers' approach to schooling and teaching children. I also offer a brief discussion on the impact of philanthropic support to Georgia's Black schools by White northern philanthropists. I provide final reflections on the cumulative data that I gathered throughout my investigation of Black teachers and the investigation of the development of Georgia's public schools. Finally, I discuss several implications of the dissertation and conclude with recommendations for further research and a final thought on the schooling of African Americans in Georgia.

What this Study Affords Readers

This study provides a unique opportunity not only for school administrators, teachers, parents, and others associated with public education, but also for non-educators to get a clearer and deeper sense of the extremely valuable contributions that African American teachers made to both the education of African Americans in Georgia and to the state's public education system. The study affords an opportunity for readers to, *not just see* African American teachers as, *just teachers*, but rather, to profoundly *read* these individuals, to understand

their positive and influential relationship to the Black community, and to learn valuable lessons from their recollection of their experiences. Black teachers not only demonstrated compassion for their students, creative abilities to teach in ways that made their learners successful, and unwavering discipline, they also "made it possible for Blacks to speak out and tell the truth about [racism], a major problem in our society" (M. E. Dyson, personal communication, Speech, January 23, 2003).

The historical chapter revealed the defiant nature of some of the highest-ranking politicians and influential individuals in Georgia, and how they manipulated and abused their authority and power to deny equal education to African American school children. The chapter also offered a perceptible and rarely disclosed discussion regarding the unrelenting extent to which Georgia's governors and other powerful public school officials battled to develop and operate a racially segregated school system tilted toward improving the social and economic status of Whites while forcing Blacks to live a life of poverty and servitude, and to endure substandard schooling. Accounts within the historical chapter indicate that perhaps the greatest flaw in the worldview that politicians and other White community leaders used for developing a public school system in Georgia was racism.

The racism that was prevalent from 1930-1970 has not gone away. Some changes have been made in the educational system, however the issues of race, to this day, have not been adequately and openly discussed in schools. Diversity is on

the agenda to be given attention in education, yet without the admission of White supremacy in Georgia schools and the recognition of the results of such one-sided approaches to integration, true acceptance of and attention to instructional strategies that meet the needs of diverse populations will not develop.

Philanthropy

Although White southern politicians had a significantly negative impact on African Americans' education, White northern philanthropists countered with positive sentiments when they contributed much needed resources to black schools. In fact, African Americans and the public education system in Georgia owe a debt of gratitude to White northern philanthropists for the mission and role they played in supporting public and private education for Negroes in Georgia. It is clear that the intentions of philanthropists varied such that some were said to have contributed in order to uplift the Black masses and offer them a liberal education as a means to help them achieve racial equality while others were said to have contributed simply to educate Blacks so that they would be more suitable as laborers and tenants under White supervision.

Never the less, their contributions, when considered collectively, were instrumental in both improving the overall social and economic plight of African Americans and in shaping the type and amount of education established in Georgia. As with the different motives reported to have inspired philanthropists to give to Georgia education, different stories have been told about the times of

segregation and integration that perpetuated the myths about Blacks in Georgia educational environments.

Final Reflections

The multitude of different histories associated with Black education in Georgia resulted from a mixture of ideologies and attitudes of northern Whites, southern Whites, politicians and occasionally Georgia Blacks. The often-convoluted stories that circulated publicly in White circles gave rise to and shaped public education for Blacks as a separate class of people within Georgia. I believe that the politics of race and class played the primary role in determining how and to what extent African Americans were to be educated in Georgia both, prior to and after the 1954 decision in the landmark case of *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka*. Southern politicians' views of race and class supported the continuance of a strong caste system in Georgia that placed Blacks on a lower level of the system than Whites.

Fortunately, others in the country did not agree with Georgia leaders and the way was paved for school desegregation, which became the nucleus of the struggle to abolish a caste system in Georgia. Although schools are now technically desegregated many schools are operating with only token integration—a condition I believe to be perpetuated in part by tracking policies within schools and by the segregated conditions of the general population within individual communities in the south. It is less common in South Georgia to find racially

mixed middle class neighborhoods than it is to find communities that are densely populated with either Blacks or Whites.

It is likely that whatever causes the neighborhoods to remain separated is the same factor that caused Whites to believe their methods of education were *right for all children* and consequently, held to them when attempting to integrate. Although Black children had better resources in the newly integrated schools, they lost the value of the African American pedagogy in the process of desegregation. The holdover of traditional White educational methods with little to no consideration given to the effective aspects of African American pedagogy contributed to the array of problems that plague desegregated Georgia schools today. Student achievement scores in Georgia clearly demonstrate problems related to delivering effective instruction for students of different races and ethnicities. An assessment of these educational problems suggests that education is not a neutral process; rather it is one that is highly influenced by emotions and personal prejudices. Some teachers bring those emotions and prejudices with them into the classroom and, as a result of their biases, teach and relate to students with insensitivity.

Consequently, there is a need for teachers to broaden their perspectives and adapt their pedagogical models and school curricula in order to better serve a student population that is rapidly changing in terms of race and ethnic makeup. School administrators must understand that many old policies are outdated and that new policies must be implemented to serve the change in demographics for

students and teachers. Cultural synchronization between school administrators, teachers, and students within schools is essential for effective school management and academic instruction, particularly for Black and other minority students.

These new issues in education have far reaching implications and raise a broad range of questions that educators must consider if schools are to effectively serve all children being taught. Clearly, in Georgia we must find ways to address emergent questions such as: (1) How can we recruit and train more African American and Hispanic faculty? and (2) To what extent are desegregated schools under serving Black and other minority students as a result of the relatively low number of Black and other minority teachers employed and the lack of training for White teachers in culturally appropriate pedagogy?

Studying the historical inequities of education in Georgia and the perspectives of African American teachers has provided me with a sense of urgency and cast light on the significance and need for a more culturally synchronized and non racist public education system. Public school systems in Georgia have fallen into a state of inertia with regard to these issues and could be approaching a status of at-risk institutions. Given Georgia's White-Black teacher ratio of 80 to 20 and the possibility of, at best, a lack of cultural sensitivity and, at worst, racist attitudes among White teachers, it is fair to raise the question, "Are black students being adequately served in today's desegregated schools?" We have evidence that African American teachers in the past employed a pedagogical style when teaching Black students that proved to be effective in classroom

management including discipline, and in getting their students to master the subject matter taught. It seems clear that today's schools and teachers are not as effective with Black students as they should be; however, this dissertation provides insight into ways to change traditional educational practice to address its inadequacies.

Implications for Practice

This study supports the notion that teachers are the greatest source of information about teaching, and in particular, African American teachers are the most valuable and knowledgeable source for effectively teaching and communicating with African American students. The same is true for other races and ethnic groups. The best pedagogical practices of experienced Black and White teachers must be combined and all teachers and school administrators must join together so that culturally relevant teaching can be implemented within desegregated classrooms across Georgia.

In the same context, we might draw upon the knowledge and experiences of the best African American teachers to design training courses for new teachers entering the field. Mentoring and ethnic awareness programs such as the ones mentioned previously in this study might also quell many of the negative myths that have been associated with different races and ethnic groups and improve instructional practices. Simply adding a text to the teacher education curriculum that tells the stories of teachers of color would raise the level of awareness of the problem among future teachers.

In Georgia we must address the fact that only 20% of Georgia's teachers are Black with a student population slightly less than 40% African American. It is imperative that wide-ranging programs be implemented across the state to actively recruit and retain African American teachers.

Effective classroom management strategies and student discipline are important issues for classroom teachers, in desegregated schools. It is vital that teachers and teacher trainers recognize and address the idea that education and the experiences within the classroom are processes that are influenced by emotion and personal prejudices. Until we recognize the significance of each educator's subjective nature, little can be done to address the problems that subjectivity and related prejudices and biases may bring to the classroom. Consequently, there is a need to implement effective racial and ethnic awareness programs within schools and school districts-programs that provide the freedom and security to not only explore the differences of others, but more importantly programs that provide the freedom and security to explore one's own belief system in relation to others

A starting point for such a program may be in the implementation of a required race and ethnic awareness course as part of the teacher education curriculum. Teachers who have been trained in the cultural and social aspects of students of other races and ethnicities, and who have knowledge of and clinical experiences with students' differences will be valuable assets within schools and better equipped to effectively manage multiracial and multiethnic children. Teachers who are well trained in cultural diversity might make excellent

candidates as mentors and coordinators for programs designed to promote better human relations among different race and ethnic groups within schools.

As we enter the 21st century and consider the demographic changes within Georgia's public schools, there are three major thrusts on which public education must focus: (1) There is a need for proactive programs that place emphases on recruiting African American and Hispanic teachers, (2) Teacher education must be retooled to include sensitivity courses that deal with race and ethnicity awareness that includes the historical, cultural, and social aspects of peoples' differences, and (3) Programs must be implemented to ensure that school administrators and policy makers are trained and retrained in the same manner so that schools will have the benefit of wise policy decisions. This is particularly important since school policies play a major role in school curricula and in the governance of all teachers and students.

Recommendations for Further Research

It is recommended that scholars and researchers continue to probe deeply into the experiences of African American teachers who taught during the era covered by this study to ascertain what variables beyond race impacted and influenced African American teachers. Perhaps institutions such as the Black church and the family had great impact on African American teachers before and after the era on which this study focused. Such ventures may provide rich and meaningful findings and broaden the literature in this area.

Another recommendation is that this study be extended or an independent study be conducted that takes into account the perspectives of White teachers who taught in Georgia between 1930 and 1970. A comparative study of White teachers' perspectives on race and education in Georgia might reveal similar or contrasting observations and meanings associated with events that occurred in Georgia's schools. Because of the rapid increase of Hispanic students population in Georgia, I strongly recommend that a study be implemented to investigate the impact that the current educational structure has on this population of students.

Finally, it is recommended that a study be conducted that focuses on the perspectives of Black teachers who taught strictly in desegregated schools in Georgia; perhaps a period beginning in 1975 and covering the last 25 years of the twentieth century. Such a study might provide valuable insight on how race and politics influence current education and the current educational process. In order to truly improve public education so that achievement of White and Black students is optimized and so that all teachers, Black and White, can deliver the highest level of quality education to all students. A similar study should be conducted that focuses on White and Black teachers' perspectives regarding current issues that address race and schooling. Issues such as second-generation racial discrimination in schools along with proactive school programs that address nondiscriminatory educational practices within schools and between schools should be addressed.

One Final Thought

Education is a fundamental component of any sophisticated and highly developed society. Public education is an essential social component woven deeply into the fiber of the American culture. However, American culture is complex and quite diverse, involving many different races and ethnicities. As long as these differences exist within American society, racism is likely to continue to exist as well.

The perspectives of teachers and communities that comprise each race and ethnic group in Georgia are important. Each group represents important stakeholders in the educational process in Georgia. Better school programs for all teachers and students in Georgia will exist when Georgians objectively consider the contributions each group makes and how those contributions influence and affect the whole educational process. Public schools served as one of the first clinical laboratories in which attempts were made to inoculate the disease of racism. Georgians will continue to suffer from the fallout of racism if schooling and racism in schools continue to cohabitate. The great challenge for Georgians and all Americans is to try and use schools, political agencies, and other local, state, and national institutions as tools to eradicate racism, social inequities, and economic injustices.

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Appendix A: Research Methodology

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The dominant style of this research was patterned after a relatively new technique for displaying and presenting qualitative data. The technique was first explored and undertaken by Sara Lawrence Lightfoot in the latter part of the 1970s and masterfully presented in her 1983 book, *The Good High School*. The essence of this new technique combines written portraits with conventional methodologies (Miles & Huberman, 1994) for presenting qualitative studies. This relatively new technique seeks to capture generic character, personality, culture, and the associated meanings and values that individuals hold. It is intended to offer readers a clear overview, into a situation or personality in a manner that minimizes researcher subjectivity.

Michele Foster (1997) in her book, *Black Teachers on Teaching*, skillfully used the technique of combining the art and science of portraiture as a vehicle for organizing and presenting information gathered from 11 Black teachers. Her book served as the primary blueprint for the overall design of my study. A more in depth discussion of research design, data collection, analysis, validity, and data display will be found in this appendix. Appendix A also provides discussion of the pilot study and researcher qualifications.

Research Design

Four research questions anchor the focus of the research and provide an initial map and point of reference for conducting interviews with participants. Participants for the study consisted of retired teachers who taught between 1930 and 1970 in rural and city schools in Atlanta and in several towns and rural communities throughout Southwest Georgia, and in Valdosta, Georgia, a town located in the central and southern most part of the state. Some participants in the study may have taught in other sections of the state or country; however, their primary teaching tenure was in the geographic area described above.

To accomplish the research goal delineated in the purpose of the study in chapter one, a search for potential participants was conducted by contacting teachers and other educators who were employed in the educational profession in Georgia at the time of the study. Other contacts who might help identify potential participants included members of various churches, various political and business leaders in the community, key individuals within multiple communities who may have been knowledgeable of potential participants, and personal contacts with known retired teachers. The strategy for conducting the research was to identify at least 11 participants who would agree to share their perceptions of what it was like to be part of the education system of Georgia during the designated period. The sample of potential participants of interest for this study was limited to African American teachers who retired from teaching and whose teaching career consisted primarily of teaching in Georgia. These requirements assured me a pool of

teachers who had maximum experience in education in Georgia as opposed to those with only a few years in which to ground their responses and with limited knowledge of the intricacies of how education in Georgia was developed and implemented. Initial communication to locate and identify potential participants was via telephone and face-to-face contacts with teachers who were still actively teaching.

Interviews were built around 51 interview questions (see Appendix B) that were initially constructed to allow the participants a starting point to discuss issues and events aimed at answering the four research questions and five sub questions articulated in chapter one. However, it is noteworthy to acknowledge clearly that the actual structural continuum of the research project in terms of what participants chose to say or how they responded to certain interview questions was not rigorously pre-specified. Punch (2000) classifies this type of research study as "the unfolding, emerging type" (p. 42). The interview questions were not constructed for use in any rigorous preplanned or standardized order. This is what Punch (1998) referred to when he wrote:

> But instead there are general questions to get the interview going and to keep it moving. Specific questions will then emerge as the interview unfolds, and the wording of those questions will depend upon directions the interview takes. There are no pre-established categories for responding. (Punch, 1998, p. 176)

The overall research strategy was to use key individuals and personal contacts as indicated above to identify and secure consent to interview 11 African American retired teachers. These interviews would be conducted in a domestic

setting or at another facility designated for interviews, provided any participant did not wish to be interviewed in his or her home. A schedule for conducting each interview was established. The study required that some participants be interviewed more than once. In such cases, a subsequent schedule for a second interview was arranged. However, the follow-up interviews were more structured and aimed at targeting specific matters that I needed to address for more clarity and completeness in reporting. All participants were asked to sign the "Consent to Interview" form (see Appendix D) prior to the initial interview. Also, each participant was informed of the purpose of the study.

A tape recorder and field notes were used to gather participants' responses during each interview (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I began the process of transcribing the tape recordings and writing elaborated notes from the original field notes of one interview while I continued to tape other interviews and gather data from other participants. The data analysis process consisted of organizing, coding, categorizing, and dividing the data into coded sections using the Ethnograph version IV computer software designed for qualitative data analysis. The software was highly effective for separating data, organizing large and small amounts of text into themes and categories, and describing what the text was about (Jorgensen, 1989; Seidel, 1998). Categories and themes emerged as the context and meanings of transcribed data were synthesized. Large and small pieces of data organized in this manner produced pieces of text that were analyzed with respect to other pieces of text and assigned more codes in order to corroborate my ideas

and interpretations related to participants' meaning. A sample of an Ethnograph IV coded interview data file is provided in Appendix C. After establishing themes and patterns and classifying data into various categories, the process of telling the story of the retired teachers using the coded Ethnograph IV data files as a guide began (Maxwell, 1996). Analysis was conducted with the understanding that at all times during the research process a considerable amount of flexibility was maintained, not only in dealing with the emergent insight of the research participants, but equally so in cases where research data overlapped onto multiple themes and categories (Maxwell, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The design of this study utilized an inductive approach that focused on a relatively small number of individuals and on specific situations with which they were involved. The primary strategy in implementing this type of research design maximized the opportunity to determine how participants made sense of what had happened, and how their perspectives of what happened (specific events, activities, and situations) informed their actions. The objective was to capture the "participants' perspective" (Maxwell, 1996, p. 17) and to tell the story of African American teachers from "the native's point of view" (Schmertzing, 2001) in a clear manner that remained true to their accounts.

In addition to phenomenological interpretation (defined and discussed in more detail under the heading "Linking Variant Analytic approaches," below), I took exact quotes and large chunks of transcribed raw data and integrated them into the final report in the form of portraits of each participant (Miles &

Huberman, 1994). Portraiture was significant in reporting the research findings because in addition to providing a character and professional profile of each teacher, portraits of participants conveyed significance and insight into teachers' perspective using their own words (Foster, 1997; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983).

Emergent Structure

Emergent structure in research must unfold or develop without being bound by rigorous design constraints or it may cause the original plan, design, research expectation, and purpose to dictate the research results (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Emergent design, associated with qualitative research, is logical and often evolves as it did in this study. Emergent structure was particularly evident in this case because the conceptual framework of the study was grounded in the retired teachers' personal experiences. The participants' subjective evaluations, interpretation of experiences, and the extent of relative significance they associated with various issues and conditions that they experienced formed the basis for guiding data collection, transcription of interviews, and data analysis.

Although the research focused on race and its impact on Black teachers who taught between 1930-1970 or earlier, it must be pointed out that the initial focus of the research shifted slightly to include such things as Black teachers' nurturing and caring attitudes, Black family values and expectations, and the role of teachers within the Black community. Schmertzing (2001) contends that a basic element in conducting interviews is that emergent data from participants may change the direction and even the original purpose of the study, as well result in

new or even altered insights on the part of the researcher. This emergent design phenomenon occurred during this study and allowed the participants to "map the territory," (Schmertzing, 2001) that is, to structure association and meaning around their conceptual domain rather than being guided by my own conceptual subjectivity. Such interviewee-driven mapping allowed participants to determine to some extent the direction in which the research project proceeded. This is a design strategy that is often used in qualitative research as a means of collecting unexpected but rich data (Schmertzing, 2001). This emergent design concept exposed other issues that I had not been aware of and had not initially anticipated. The research relied heavily upon the participants' perceptions of different experiences and the importance that they assigned to those experiences. The eventual direction that the research followed relied heavily upon participants' perceptions of different experiences and the importance they assigned to those experiences (Schmertzing, 2001).

Grounded Theory

"Grounded theory is both a strategy for conducting research and a procedure for analyzing data" (Punch, 1998, p. 163). It is currently widely used as an interpretive strategy in social science research (Maxwell, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Punch, 1998). Grounded theory was a significant component of the conceptual framework of this study since I intended that any theory or interpretation associated with the research be generated on the basis of the data

collected. Any theoretical findings resulting from the study would have to have been developed inductively from the data (Punch, 1998).

The research project focused on studying circumstances under which African American teachers labored. The study explored attitudes, philosophies, and the experiences of a relatively small sampling of retired African American teachers. As such, it is significant to report their perspectives on issues that they faced as educators. Since the decision was made to take an inner perspective approach on how experiences impacted teachers' lives, it was appropriate to present the findings of the study without including an independent and separate chapter on a review of current literature. What the current literature had to offer was introduced into the study by mapping the historical accounts that formed the development and growth of public schooling in Georgia into the historical chapter. The approach and design of the study was appropriate because it was an effective approach for investigating how African American teachers evaluated some of the current literature and their experiences regarding Georgia's public schools.

The study consisted of 11 subjects. The sample size for the research project was small due to the purpose of the research and the practical constraints involved in locating potential subjects, their willingness to participate in the research project, and the limitations inherent in scheduling interviews, establishing interview locations, traveling to interview sites, and analyzing qualitative data (Punch, 1998).

Negotiating A Research Relationship

Personal contact with each participant was very important. I gained entry into the participants' domains by providing them with information that the study was being done in partial fulfillment for the Doctor of Education Degree at Valdosta State University. I also explained to the participants that the study or portions of it might be published at a later date. This strategy was based on the assumption that most educators, particularly those who had made a life long career of the education profession and had retired were willing to help others obtain an advanced degree. Additionally, I expected that veteran educators were more likely to recognize the value of research reports and therefore would contribute honestly and as thoroughly as possible.

A significant amount of time was spent pondering the relationship that I, as a researcher, needed to establish with each participant. Understanding any relationship I established with participants might be a complex and changing entity, caution and consideration was given to guard against any bias or subjectivity on my part (Maxwell, 1996). It was reasonable to theorize that as a researcher, I could be more effective at getting participants to be openly expressive and reveal deeply personal thoughts, and engage in critical reflections on issues by conducting a mental analysis of the situation (sizing them up) before the actual interview (Schmertzing, 2001). It was also expedient to think through anticipated interviews and conceptualize a predetermined rapport for each participant with the flexibility to change as needed (Punch, 1998). Additionally, it

was essential that I guard against any partisan influence on the research setting and at the same time establish a rapport with participants and gain their trust by indicating, when appropriate, that simple honest perceptions were more important to the study than glamorized stories (Maxwell, 1996).

Understanding that the research relationship was the means by which sufficient data collection was to be partially or more fully accomplished strengthened my belief that rich data gained from participants would be determined by the relationship I established with them (Maxwell, 1996). Therefore, it was critical to establish a relationship of trustworthiness between participants and myself. As I approached the interview process I realized that I needed to seize the moment, take risks if necessary, and develop a trusting bond with participants before data was collected. If an impasse developed during an interview, then intellect and personal skills had to be used to foster trust and develop the type of relationship that would allow the interview to proceed in a manner that would produce rich data (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983). It is important in terms of validity that participants are open about their perceptions and feelings, and trust the researcher to use data collected in ways that would not cause personal harm or humiliation. Maxwell (1996) asserted that the desired relationship in a qualitative study is one that enables the researcher to ethically learn the things needed in order to suggest reasonable and logical answers to the research questions.

During initial contact, participants were informed of the research project and presented a consent form on which they authorized me to include them in the study. Participants were contacted at least one week prior to any interviews being scheduled and were notified of the specific interview date and time. Although a schedule for interviews was established with each participant, the study required that some participants be interviewed more than once. In such cases, a subsequent schedule for a second interview was arranged. Interviews were conducted at participants' homes when possible; otherwise arrangements were made to interview participants at local churches, local schools, or other locations of choice.

Data Collection

The major data-gathering technique was face-to-face, in-depth, and unstructured interviews. Punch (1998) asserted that the interview is one of the most widely used data collection tools for conducting qualitative studies. He claimed that the interview is one of the most powerful ways for understanding others and that the interview is a very good instrument for accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations, and construction of reality. The unstructured open-ended interview is a widely used powerful tool capable of producing rich and valuable data in social research and other fields (Punch, 1998; Schmertzing, 2001). During this study, open-ended interview questions were used to give participants the opportunity to provide in-depth accounts of their experiences.

Schmertzing (2001) further asserted that in addition to the initial unstructured interview being an excellent tool for mapping the research territory it is also an excellent means for developing and exploring potential themes and patterns as well as other relevant insights that may emerge during the study. The interviews for this research project consisted primarily of open-ended interview questions. The interviews were unstructured in that there was no pre-arranged rigid order for questioning participants. The questions were designed to initiate the interview and not as a rigid guide that each participant must follow. Once the interview was in progress, the participant had full latitude to lead the conversation and map his or her own territory. However, the interview technique used was initially designed with a limited number of constant components, which included a small number of pre-determined questions that each participant would be asked. A small number of pre-determined patterns, categories, and themes under which some data would be placed also existed. Another constant feature of the interview techniques that I used was the attempt to address specific issues and similar situations that were common to each participant.

A tape recorder and field notes were used to store the data collected (Maxwell, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Also, I sought old personal documents, school documents, and other artifacts to support and substantiate the participants' stories. These documents might have been official or personal ones that accounted for early practices, events, and conditions prevalent in education during the years on which the research focused.

Methodology for Data Analysis

The primary strategy for the data analysis process was to organize data into some logical and meaningful form. The objective for data analysis was to make accurate interpretations of the data collected and then construct a report that made sense of the information.

Interview notes and taped conversations were transcribed into elaborated notes. The transcribed data was then analyzed to determine if any patterns, consistent events, similar characteristics, methods, composite traits, or styles existed in the lives of the participants. Data files from the Ethnograph IV computer analysis software were used to facilitate organizing data into categories and themes, and the analytic processes of data reduction and data display. The data analysis strategy involved using a phenomenological approach to data analysis coupled with a more traditional approach of coding and classifying data fit into certain themes and categories that had emerged. I also integrated the analysis process described by Miles and Huberman (1994) into the data analysis component of this study. They defined qualitative data analysis as consisting of three major activities that might unfold concurrently: (a) Data reduction, (b) data display, and (c) conclusion drawing and verification. These three data analysis components provided the overall framework for conducting data analysis. This three-dimensional analysis process required three main operations; namely, coding, memoing, and developing propositions:

1. *Coding:* Coding is the analysis process of using tags, names, or labels, and developing themes, categories, and patterns to separate and identify pieces of data (Punch, 1998). Maxwell (1996) provided an excellent coding strategy that calls for researchers to break data into small pieces that form categories and themes that might assist the researcher in understanding data and forming conclusions about what the data means or suggests. For this study I used multiple categories, themes and patterns to "fracture" data and rearrange them into smaller cells that facilitated data comparison within and between categories. Coding also aids in developing theoretical concepts. The coding process was flexible and allowed data to be sorted into broad themes and categories that emerged. The coding process was grounded in the data collected; however, some categories and patterns were developed inductively as the data became more familiar and better understood, particularly during the analysis process (Maxwell, 1996).

   The pilot study for this project aided in developing some of the categories that were used in the coding process for the study. However, the general coding strategy was developed in interaction with the participants' responses and the understanding and interpretation of the particular data that was analyzed (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

   Contextualizing analysis was also used during the analysis process as a

means to attempt to understand interview transcripts in the context of the participants' experiences and perspectives (Maxwell, 1996).

2. *Memoing:* Memoing is the process of theorizing write-up of the reasoning and ideas about codes and their relationships. Memoing was at times as brief as a word or few words and at other times as extensive as a paragraph or a few pages.
3. *Developing propositions:* Developing propositions involved producing statements about the data that have logical conclusions and can be accepted as truth based on the previous analysis procedures. This last analysis operation extended to produce conclusion drawing and the final research report (Punch, 1998).

Data Reduction. Data reduction is a process that is continuous throughout the life of any qualitative study. The data reduction process for this study actually began with the formulation of the research questions, determining who the participants would be, and designing the study. The process continued until the final report was completed. More specifically, data reduction for this study consisted of selecting, simplifying, abstracting, categorizing, formulating themes and patterns, and transforming data from tape recordings and field notes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data reduction was the data analysis process used to sort, focus, discard, and organize the data so that it would make sense. The data reduction analysis process helped induce general conclusions regarding the African

American educational experience and to accurately tell the evolving stories of the participants.

Data Display. The second analysis component used was data display. Generally, data display is simply an organized, compressed assembly of information in an immediately accessible, compact form. This allowed relative ease in understanding what the data meant and what action to take in order to draw justified conclusions. Usually, data displays include many types of matrices, graphs, charts, and networks (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Specifically, data display for this study consisted of elaborated field notes, transcriptions of tape recording, and the thematic data matrix.

Conclusion Drawing and Verification

The third analysis component was conclusion drawing and verification. To some extent, this analysis component extended from the start of data collection and continued through the conclusion of the research report. This analysis process includes determining what the data means and determining and using a means to verify the data's plausibility, sturdiness, and accuracy (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Consequently, this process of data analysis is a sub-component of research validity. Conclusion drawing and verification for this study included the principle known as "triangulation" (Maxwell, 1996, p. 75). I triangulated the data from participants by interviewing different participants in different settings and at different times. Confidentiality of who participates in the study continually existed among participants. This allowed better confidence and reliability in assessing the

data. Additionally, caution and care was maintained to guard against any partisan influence on the research setting while working to establish a rapport with the participants. Participants were appropriately and carefully advised that the truth is more important to the study than glamorized stories.

The idea of portraiture was a significant component of the data analysis process because the technique presented collected data in a format that provided a profile of each participant as well as the participant's point of view in his or her own words (Foster, 1997; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983)

Linking Variant Analytic Approaches. Interpretation was the primary and most critical analytic process used in this study. In addition to other data analysis techniques already described, the phenomenological approach for qualitative data analysis was by far the most crucial among the various analytic techniques integrated into the data analysis process (Miles & Huberman, 1994). "Phenomenology is indeed a reasoned inquiry which discovers the inherent essences of appearances" (Stewart & Mickunas, 1990, p. 3). These two research scholars further assert, "An appearance is anything of which one is conscious" (Stewart & Mickunas, 1990, p. 3). Phenomenologists hold that interpretation of data presented in text form comes through "deep understanding," (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 8) identification with and an understanding or an "indwelling" (p. 8) with the subject of inquiry. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that there is an inevitable "interpretation" (p. 8) of meanings made both by the participants in a qualitative study and by the researcher.

The essence of the data analysis process for this study adheres to the tenets of phenomenology. Using the phenomenology concept for data analysis means that there is a search for participants' immediate experiences freed from all theoretical presuppositions and interpretations (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stewart & Mickunas, 1990). I wanted to gain meaning from the participants and interact with their consciousness. This was a mental process that was achieved by focusing on participants' "mental perception, intelligence, or thought" (Stewart & Mickunas, 1990, p. 37).

Also, the more traditional qualitative data analysis procedure described by Miles and Huberman (1994) was integrated into the analysis process. These two scholars defined qualitative data analysis as consisting of three activities that may unfold concurrently: (a) data reduction, (b) data display, and (c) conclusion drawing and verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994). These three data analysis components were interwoven into the phenomenological approach to data analysis and together they provided the overall framework within which data analysis was conducted.

While employing the phenomenological approach as the dominant method of analysis, Close observations were made in order to make use of any similar patterns, themes, or categories that might have naturally emerged during the analysis process. Punch (1998) supports this type of multiple analysis methodology and asserts that qualitative designs, including data analysis, may vary considerably. He acknowledges that one might use several combinations of

compatible analytic methodologies (Punch, 1998). Phenomenology cut a middle path between the subject-object dichotomy of empirical data and the idealism of appearances, "which reduce phenomena to only states of consciousness" (Stewart & Mickunas, 1990, p. 50). While some phenomenological methods center on interpretation, they also remain flexible enough to gain firm empirical knowledge of social or natural phenomena (Stewart & Mickunas, 1990). The overriding aim for any analysis approach or combination of approaches, as in the case of this study is to allow the researcher the ability to construct a coherent, internally consistent argument from empirical facts, perceptions, meanings, interpretations, or social acts (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This process can involve the phenomenological interpretative approach simultaneously with the traditional analytic components of reduction, display and drawing conclusions, and the three operations of coding, memoing, and developing propositions described by Miles and Huberman (1994).

Data analysis for this study was made up of many connected approaches. The phenomenological analysis approach undertaken in this study involved multiple readings of data transcripts and variant data condensations in an effort to make good interpretations, and search for regularities and essences of participants' stories (Miles & Huberman, 1994). "The analytic challenge for all qualitative researchers is finding coherent descriptions and explanations that still include all of the gaps, inconsistencies, and contradictions inherent in personal and social life" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 14). The extent to which traditional approaches

to qualitative data analysis discussed by Miles and Huberman (1994) evolved naturally from the phenomenological approach and formed a compatible mixture of analytic processes.

Validity. The essence of "Validity" in any research is best captured by the word *accuracy* (Huck & Cormier, 1996). Miles and Huberman (1994), defines internal validity in terms of such words as "apparency," "authenticity," "plausibility," and "adequacy" (p. 278-279). My own conceptualization of internal validity is that it is the measure or degree to which any research findings are accurate relative to the research questions, the research participants, or the research variables. It cannot be proven nor can it be taken for granted; it is a goal rather than an idea. Validity is always a key issue in any research (Maxwell, 1996).

While conducting this study I continually focused on the phenomenon known as internal validity. Internal validity measures to what extent research findings correctly and accurately reflect, represent, or interpret the matter or situation being researched. It refers to determining the degree of internal logic, consistency, and coherence of the study (Punch, 1998). For this study, internal validity involved correctly interpreting the participants' stories.

Maxwell (1992) asserted that validity is relative; rather than being a context-independent aspect of methods or conclusions, it is a measure that must be assessed in relationship to the purposes and circumstances associated with the

research. This argument supports how I dealt with internal validity threats associated with this study.

External validity for this study involved the accuracy and the extent to which conclusions of the study could be generalized. It was anchored by careful interpretation of participants' meanings and perspectives, and their transferability to other context (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Triangulation. The conclusions emerging from the study were validated and triangulated through independent corroboration of events and experiences offered in separate interviews in different settings but producing the same data results, without disclosure of interview data among different participant. Triangulating the data in this way helped avoid two of the most prominent validity threats in qualitative research: (a) Researcher bias: care was given to avoid subjectivity in reporting the research findings. It is strongly recommended that all researchers systematically monitor subjectivity. The researcher's lines of subjectivity must remain open in order to avoid the trap of personal perceptions and sentiments being offered as legitimate or objective data (Peshkin, 1991). and (b) Reactivity: it is impossible to totally eliminate researcher influence on participants. The appropriate and equally important resolution to this problem was to use influence productively to probe for true accounts of the participants' lives. I was cautious to not allow any subjective theories or preconceptions that I might have possessed taint or affect the participants' stories. These two types of validity threats were dealt with openly and cautiously since it was impossible to totally

eliminate my own preconceptions, theories, or values; a phenomenon that has been called "inherent reflexivity" (Maxwell, 1996, p. 90). I made a conscious effort to draw accurate conclusions and seek only truthfulness from the participants' stories. Researchers must be mindful at all times during any study that, with respect to subjectivity and the participants involved, the research findings must be anchored in integrity (Maxwell, 1996; Punch, 1998).

Validity is relative and should be assessed in relationship to the purposes and circumstances of the research project. Lee (1991) offers an excellent strategy and one which I used in this study to link validity to three levels of understanding: (a) The meanings and interpretations of the participants, (b) the researcher's interpretations of those meanings, and (c) the researcher's confirmatory, theory-connected operations for testing and confirming findings, such as triangulation, member checking, and researcher influence on the participants (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 263).

Member Checking. According to several research scholars Punch (1998), Maxwell (1996), and Miles and Huberman (1994) member checking is a significant component of validity. It means checking with the people who are being studied, and who gave you the data. All of the developing products of the research; its concepts, propositions, and any emerging cognitive maps should be taken back to the participants studied for confirmation, validation and verification. "Member checking is often important in grounded theory studies" (Punch, 1998, p. 260). Member checking was a systematic process of soliciting feedback about

one's data and conclusions from the participants in this study (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Member checking provided an excellent procedure for the retired teacher study both as an analysis process and as a means of achieving such validity goals as data interpretation and conclusion drawing and verification. Member checking was used in this study as both a validation strategy and as an analysis process for data collected. Taped transcripts and elaborated field notes were presented to participants before analyzing the data, to check that the record was accurate. Member checking provided the single most important way of reducing or eliminating the possibility of misinterpretation of the meaning of what participants said and the perspectives shared regarding teachers' experiences (Maxwell, 1996).

The Pilot Study

During the spring of 2000, a pilot study titled "Retired African American Teacher Study," was conducted. The pilot study investigated eight African American retired teachers with teaching experience ranging from 30 years to 45 years experience each and served as prior research for this study. Some of the participants in the pilot study had taught in other states, however, the majority of the teachers that participated in the pilot study taught mostly in Southwest Georgia.

The pilot study informed the overall research topic, including the context of the problem and the interview process. It also provided themes and categories, and a sense of what to expect from participants.

The following table (see Table 2) provides data about the interview locations and times, and years of service for the participants of the pilot study. The data analysis procedures and target population were identical to those in this study in every aspect. As a result of the pilot study, the number of interview questions used during this study was increased. Because of the emergent nature of both studies, no real significance was associated with the total number of predetermined interview questions for either study. Both shared the same research purpose.

Table 2

Pilot Study Interviews

Retired Teacher	Day Interviewed	Time Interviewed	Interview Location	Number Teaching years	Date Started	Date Retired
Sarah Allen	Tuesday	3:00 -4:30 pm	Subject's Home	35	1942	1977
Enola Childs	Tuesday	3:00 -4:30 pm	Subject's Home	30	1947	1977
Mary Wilson	Thursday	7:00 -9:00 pm	Subject's Home	37	1960	1998
Willie Packard	Friday	5:00 -7:00 pm	Subject's Home	37	1951	1988
Edward Dente	Monday	6:00 -7:30 pm	Subject's Home	40	1948	1988
Mary Pallow	Thursday	3:00 -5:00 pm	Subject's Home	45	1929	1974
Doris Hardy	Thursday	4:00 -5:30 pm	Subject's Home	44	1939	1983
Ruby Blake	Sunday	7:00 -9:00 pm	Subject's Home	35	1955	1990

The pilot project was an excellent research study to test the design, specific elements, and the overall analytic procedures for this research project. The significance and value of conducting a pilot study prior to conducting a large-scale study was not to get data per se, but to become (a better researcher) more skilled in research techniques (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). The pilot study served as a primary resource for planning and conducting this study. The experience of conducting the pilot study provided better insight into understanding the retired teachers' perspectives on the teaching experiences. The pilot project was very significant in providing themes and categories used to start the analysis process for this study. It afforded a practice run that furnished valuable information about several elements in the overall research process such as: interviewing techniques, data collection, data analysis, and about myself as a researcher.

The pilot served as prior experience for data gathering and observing the settings in which participants live. It enhanced my ability to establish rapport and be more at ease while conducting interviews. The pilot study provided me with better ideas of what to expect during interviews (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Through the experiences of conducting a pilot project I gained a keener ability for interpretation. The experience of conducting a pilot study prior to this study allowed me the opportunity to develop skillful research management techniques and thus improved my ability to conduct the same type research on a larger-scale (Maxwell, 1996).

As a result of the pilot study, slight adjustments in methodology were easily made. Better schemes were developed for identifying participants, which included a broader network utilizing others to identify and locate perspective participants. The pilot study provided opportunity to revise and increase the number of interview questions used in subsequent studies. Also, the researcher gains a prior knowledge of how to better utilize tape recording and how to be more observant of school related artifacts within the participants' surroundings during the interview process.

Researcher Qualifications

Two dominant achievements qualified me to conduct this study. First, is the pilot study, which was conducted prior to undertaking this study. The pilot study qualified me by providing a requisite experience for conducting this study. Conducting a pilot study on the inner perspectives of African American teachers provided enlightened insight essential for conducting this study and sharpened my research skills, and thereby enhanced my qualifications as a researcher capable of conducting this study. The pilot study provided the field experience as well as the analytical and reporting experience necessary to undertake this study.

Second, is my level of formal education and experience as an educator. More than sixteen years as an educator provided a vast experience in understanding many school related issues that Black teachers faced before and after school desegregation. During the past 16 years I met and discussed school related issues with many public school teachers. These experiences afforded a

broad understanding of some of the diverse issues that confronted public school teachers. My experiences as a Black educator who has taught in a desegregated school setting and as a Black student that attended segregated public schools qualify me with competencies to conduct research in this particular area. I have firsthand knowledge of the pedagogy associated with African American teachers.

Also, a number of academic research activities, classroom assignments, and research courses taken while attending graduate school qualify me to conduct this study. The following list containing six doctoral-level research related courses and general courses taken provide the academic foundation for conducting The Retired African American Teachers' Perspectives on Race and Schooling study:

1. Qualitative Research Methodologies in Education
2. Quantitative Research Methodologies in Education
3. Advanced Mixed Methodologies in Research
4. Sociological Analysis of Education
5. Curriculum and Instruction Need Assessment
6. Techniques for Educational Research Writing

Research readings on topics relating to quantitative and qualitative research include the following 13 Books:

1. *Learning From Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies,* (1994) by Robert S. Weiss
2. *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development,* (1998) by Richard E. Boyatzis

3. *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction To Theory and Methods 3rd ed.*, (1998) by Robert C. Bogdan and Sari Knopp Biklen
4. *Qualitative Data Analysis—An Expanded Sourcebook 2nd ed.*, (1994) by Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman
5. *Qualitative Research Design—An Interactive Approach,* (1996) by Joseph A. Maxwell
6. *Becoming Qualitative Researchers: An Introduction,* (1992) by Corrine Glesne and Alan Peshkin
7. *Developing effective research proposals,* (2000) by K. F. Punch
8. *Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches,* (1998) by K. F. Punch
9. *Black Teachers on Teaching,* (1997) by Michele Foster
10. *The Good High School: Portraits of Character and Culture,* (1983) by Sara Lawrence Lightfoot
11. *Reading Statistics and Research 2nd ed.,* (1996) by Schuyler W. Huck and William H. Cormier
12. *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for analyzing Talk, Text and Interaction 2nd ed.* (2001) By David Silverman
13. *Exploring Phenomenology: A Guide to the Field and its Literature 2nd ed.* (1990) by David Stewart and Algis Mickunas

These books are either related to research methodologies or to research studies related to this research project.

Limitations of This Study

This study has three primary limitations that should be disclosed to readers. First, the study is limited by its small sample size. Only eleven teachers out of thousands of African American schoolteachers who taught and retired from the public schools of Georgia participated. However, according to Punch (2000), qualitative sample sizes are usually small with no statistical grounds for guidance. The participants in this qualitative study were chosen specifically for the purpose of the study and limited by practical constraints. They did, however, live in different parts of the state, have teaching experiences in different schools and school systems, and were highly representative of the general population of African American teachers. The perspectives and stories of the eleven teachers were reported in a manner that provided enough detail and background to allow the reader to determine the degree to which the stories represent the educational experiences and perspectives of other African American teachers who taught in Georgia during the era on which this study is based (Punch, 1998).

Secondly, the study was limited in that its point of view provided only African American teachers' perspectives on race and public schooling in Georgia. Consequently, the meaning of events and experiences by participants in this study fail to include perspectives and meanings held by other groups, particularly White teachers who make up the majority of educators in Georgia. The one-sided view presented in this study gives the educational perspectives and experiences of African American teachers and in no way diminishes the accuracy or the

authenticity of other real events that occurred during their careers. Rather, the study provides a fresh and different point of view not found in traditional literature about African American teachers' perspectives on education in Georgia.

Finally, this study was limited with respect to the years between 1940 and 1970. The study did not include perspectives of African American teachers who taught after 1970 and were consequently exposed to only an integrated school setting. These teachers may indeed have different perspectives than African American teachers who taught prior to 1970, a time when integrated schools in Georgia were in their infancy.

Appendix B: Sample Interview Questions

Sample of Dissertation Interview Questions for the Retired Teacher Study

The interview will roughly follow these questions but other questions may emerge:

1. Discuss your family background-several generations, grandparents, parents, siblings, family occupational history, etc.
2. Discuss the decision(s) that led you to become a teacher—influences and particular factors relative to your decision to teach.
3. What was your educational training for the teaching profession—formal and informal (degree(s), certifications, College or University)?
4. Tell me about your career history as a teacher (years, locations, positions, rank, etc.)
5. What is the length of your retirement to date? (When did you retire?)
6. What subjects did you teach (level(s) taught, etc.)?
7. Did the teacher training you received prepare you with sufficient teaching skills?
8. Was student teaching required and what was the experience like (good or bad)?
9. What were the critical or greatest concerns in education during the years that you taught? (This is a discussion of student problems, problems in

administration, budgets and budgeting, soft and hard resources, classroom control, discipline problems, family life, drugs, and other concerns.)

10. Discuss the curriculum—basic educational requirements for students, graduation and promotion requirements, curriculum changes, etc.
11. Viewed from a social, political, and personal perspective, what were attitudes toward teaching as a professional?
12. Discuss factors and changes that caused people to stay or leave the teaching profession as the years passed.
13. How was (discuss) teacher morale and dedication toward the teaching profession?
14. Were educational improvements implemented during your tenure, if so, what were they?
15. Have you noticed a change in students over the years and if so, how have students changed over the years?
16. What were some of the conditions involving racial integration and segregation that confronted you and how were these factors dealt with?
17. Were students divided into classes over the years (tracking, religion, social class, race, sub race, sex, etc.)?
18. Compare teacher education during your tenure with teacher education of today.
19. What types of disciplinary actions were used during your tenure as a teacher?
20. Did you ever experience incidents of racism during you teaching career?

21. Did administrators treat White and Black teachers differently?
22. Were you ever denied a teaching position due to your race?
23. Were you ever denied a promotion in employment due to your race?
24. Were White teachers and Black teachers paid different salaries base on their race? If yes, how do you know that there were two pay scales?
25. Did school administrators and others treat White teachers better than Black teachers in controlling or high positions? If so, explain.
26. In your opinion were teaching supplies fairly or equitably disbursed among Black and White teachers? If not, explain.
27. Was there a Caste System between Black and White teachers?
28. Did White teachers and White administrators show favoritism (more receptive) toward light skin Black teachers as opposed to dark skin Black teachers?
29. Did Black teachers and Black administrators show favoritism (more receptive) toward light skin Black teachers as opposed to dark skin Black teachers?
30. Did you teach mathematics during your tenure?
31. Do you feel that African American students cannot learn mathematics?
32. Do you feel that African American students cannot learn mathematics as well as White students? (Can Black students' achieve in mathematics comparable to White students' achievement?)
33. Was mathematics a difficult subject for most African American students?

34. Were there indicators that African American students liked mathematics or wanted to pursue mathematics at a higher level?
35. Did males show greater achievement in math than females?
36. Did racism exist in the educational profession? If yes, how?
37. Did segregated Black schools provide a quality or excellent education for most students?
38. How did you feel about school integration?
39. Were you for or against school integration? Why or why not?
40. Did you make any special preparations for school integration?
41. In your opinion, why did schools have to integrate?
42. Did White teachers improve education for Black students?
43. Were White teachers better teachers than Black teachers?
44. What other professional options were open to you as an educated Black person?
45. Can you describe your best day and your worst day as an educator?
46. What was the most challenging part of your job?
47. Were you a member of any professional teacher organizations?
48. As a public school teacher did you feel as if you were a professional individual?
49. Tell what impact, if any, you felt that parents' schedules or social status had on their children's schooling.

50. Did you teach Black children differently than the way in which you taught White children?

51. Can you provide a few statements to summarize your teaching experiences, situations, or circumstances that stand out; provide a type of overview that capsules your educational experiences?

Appendix C: Sample Ethnograph IV Interview Data File

Discuss your family background and tell me about your siblings and your parents and where you grew up.

My name is Isaiah Isom. I was born in Baxley, Georgia, Appling County. My parents were Johnny Brice Isom and Lora Lee Isom. I am the oldest of seven children, five boys and two girls. My parents were...my father was a plumber and which I pick up the trade of plumbing through working with him for a number of years. My mother was a housewife. And that's where I picked up the idea of cleaning house and a bit of cooking and all of the domestic things that go along with what children had to do long in those days.

Who influenced you to enter the field of education and what were the circumstances associated with your decision to become a teacher?

#-INSPIRETEA
I was inspired to go into the field of education by several teachers suggesting that I would make a good teacher. I being in the senior class in high school a lot of times a teacher would be out and we couldn't find a substitute so they'd ask one of the seniors to go down and take over #-INSPIRETEA
one of the class. And I remember

distinctly I had a fourth grade class 36 |
that I was sitting in for the teacher 37 |
and after they had finished one of the 38 |
teachers came to me and said that, 39 |
"you would make a good teacher because 40 |
I noticed that those students were 41 |
really in control." I don't know what 42 |
you were teaching them but it least 43 |
you had their attention and I didn't 44 |
hear the noise that I usually hear 45 |
when a substitute comes in. So that 46 |
sort of led me into the field. 47 -#

Tell me what happened as a result of 49
being motivated by what that teacher 50
said. 51

#-DESIRE TEA $-INSPIRETEA
I had always wanted to go to college but 53 -#-$
I didn't know what I wanted to go into 54 ||
until that particular moment and still 55 ||
I had a background in plumbing and 56 ||
that's what I went to college to get a 57 |-$
degree in, plumbing. Well, it just so 58 -#
happened that the courses in plumbing 59
had ah…ah…had been dropped from that 60
college that June and I went in 61
September thinking that they still had 62
the courses. This was at Savannah 63
State College. And ah…so I looked 64
around and I said what am I going to 65
do? The course that I want to take is 66
not here. So one of the advisors said 67
to me, "why don't you go into the 68
field of Industrial Arts"? Well, I 69
didn't know what that was, coming from 70
a segregated school I had passed the 71
high school several times, the white 72
high school, and I saw this big sign 73
on the building saying "Industrial 74
Arts." And I wondered what in the 75
world is Industrial Arts? And when I 76
saw it on this college paper I said, 77

"that's the field I'm going into just 78
to see what they do in Industrial 79
Arts." Well, I got into that course 80
and there I found out that it was 81
something that I was very familiar 82
with because not only was my daddy a 83
plumber, he was a cement finisher and 84
I learned to lay bricks, he was a 85
carpenter and I learn to carpenter, I 86
learn to measure and certainly with the 87
plumbing I had to measure accurately. 88
So the only thing that I didn't have 89
any experience in was using the big 90
machines, and that came just by having 91
the desire to want to know about the 92
course. And therefore, I graduated 93
from Savannah State wit h a B. S. in 94
Industrial Arts. That was in 1958. I 95
can say that I think Savannah State 96
prepared me very well to be a teacher. 97

How did you find your first teaching job 99
after college? 100

And ah...I was out looking for a job...I 102
sent in several resumes and no answers 103
so I decided that I was not going to 104
get a teaching job into a high school 105
so a couple of weeks before school 106
started I went on vacation, stayed a 107
week. And I came back I'd received a 108
call from the director down at 109
Savannah State College saying that he 110
had a job for me in Valdosta, Georgia. 111
So he asked me if I could I be there 112
that Monday morning, I had got back 113
#-DEDICATION
that Saturday. Naturally that Monday 114 -#
morning I made my way to Valdosta and 115 |
he told me who to look for and that's 116 |
where I got my first job right out of 117 |
college in 1958, I started here at 118 |
Pinevale High School under professor 119 |

C. C. Hall. And I spent 30 years, from 120 |
1958 to 1988 in the classroom and 121 |
enjoyed every minute of it. I did not 122 |
have any (quote) problems with the 123 |
students. My stay in the classroom was 124 |
a pleasant one. 125 -#

Well, go back a little and tell me 127
about the public schools you attended. 128

Now back to my public schools that I 130
attended in Baxley, these were not 131
rural schools they were in the city. 132
My elementary school went from the 133
first through the sixth grade. Of 134
course, this was a segregated all 135
black school. 136

What were the teachers like in the 138
schools you attended? 139

#-NURTURE #-TECHERROLE
The teachers were very stern and very 141 -#
concerned about us getting an 142 |
education. And ah...I sort of liked that 143 |
because it brought about a lot of 144 |
discipline to ah...all of us that were 145 |
attending those classes. One teacher I 146 |
remember distinctly in the seven 147 |
grade, I guess you would call that the 148 |
beginning of junior high, she would 149 |
ah...stress cleanliness and she would 150 |
stress proper dress, and you didn't go 151 |
into her class with your collars 152 |
opened. She'd make you fasten it and 153 |
your shoes had to be shined, and 154 |
ah...you had to wear clean clothes, not 155 |
necessarily new clothes but they had 156 |
to be clean and she would stress 157 |
cleanliness. And I liked that and I 158 |
adopted that in my classroom when I 159 |
started teaching and had a lot of fund 160 |
with it but I made a lot of strides in 161 |

upgrading the students' ideas what 162 |
cleanliness was about. 163 -#

Did your school have adequate books and 165
other educational supplies? 166

#-OLD SCHOOL #-NOSUPPLIES
When I was in school we had hand-me-down 168 -#
books from the [white] high school and 169 |
from the elementary school. It was a 170 |
black school, Baxley Training School 171 |
was a black school and the books we 172 |
received as I said were hand-me-down. 173 |
We know this because we would find 174 |
names in the books that we got of 175 |
students that some of the families we 176 |
knew. By being in the same city we 177 |
knew some of the white families 178 |
because some of our people worked for 179 |
them and we'd find books with their 180 |
children's name in them. 181 -#

When you were a student how did blacks 183
usually get to school? 184

#-BUSSING
And ah...we ah...had no public 186 -#
transportation like the whites had. I 187 |
can remember distinctly there were 188 |
students that lived five to ten miles 189 |
from the school and the black students 190 |
would walk to school while the white 191 |
$-COPESKILLS
buses would pass the black children 192 |-$
walking to school and sometimes they 193 ||
[the white students] would pick at 194 ||
them [the black students] on their way 195 ||
to school but those black children 196 ||
would walk and make. And it would be 197 -#|
#-BUSSING
so cold that we would have a fire in 198 -#|
our pot-belly stove and we warmed 199 ||
water so that when those students who 200 ||

had to walk that long distance they 201 ||
could put their hands into the water 202 ||
and thaw them out because they would 203 ||
be very-very cold. And it would take 204 ||
them a while to thaw their hands 205 ||
out...while the white students of 206 ||
course rode the bus and I assume the 207 ||
bus had heat. 208 -#-$

#-BUSSING
And later years we ah...there was a 210 -#
private citizen that started a bus 211 |
system that came from one of the 212 |
utmost west part of the county, that 213 |
he would bring students in on his 214 |
little makeshift bus, but there was no 215 |
transportation provided for the black 216 |
students with a bus until [pausing and 217 |
thinking] I guess it was in 1947, 218 |
1947, ah...they provided us with one bus 219 |
that ran from North to South and that 220 |
bus was a hand-me-down of course, and 221 |
it would sometimes break down and 222 |
naturally being an old bus they had 223 |
got all the use they [whites]could get 224 |
out of it and they let us [blacks] 225 |
$-TRUSTEE $-TRUSTEES
have it then. And ah...then the driver 226 -#-$
had to be supplemented by the trustees 227 |
of the school, they had trustees of 228 |
the schools that would raise funds to 229 |
buy the wood and buy the coal that we 230 |
heated with. And then we would go in 231 |
the woods of course to find wood to 232 |
fill the fire. But the trustees had to 233 |
supplement the bus driver with 234 |
ah...funds they would raise throughout 235 |
the community because the white 236 |
weren't willing or didn't have the 237 |
funds to pay the black bus driver. 238 -$

I'm interested in these trustees so 240
tell me who they were, how they 241

assumed their power and authority, and 242
what were their responsibilities? 243

#-TRUSTEES
These trustees were the upstanding men 245 -#
in the community, perhaps preachers, 246 |
or businessmen, or farmers, or 247 |
landowners or something. The trustees 248 |
were the black board of education. 249 |
They determined whether there was a 250 |
need for a teacher in a school system 251 |
based on the principal's 252 |
recommendations and they would make 253 |
recommendations as to whether that 254 |
teacher would retain her contract or 255 |
would get a contract or whether they 256 |
would be relieved of their position. 257 |
And ah...they would sometimes play 258 |
favoritism [he laughs a bit]. The 259 |
trustees did have power. 260 |
|
They...the trustees would rely heavily on 262 |
the principals' recommendation, yet 263 |
they had an agenda of their own, a 264 |
standard by which the teachers had to 265 |
live up to in the community. And they 266 |
would keep record on whether these 267 |
teachers would actually attend church 268 |
and ah...based on that and any kind of 269 |
moral problems that a teacher may have 270 |
had...all that would be considered as 271 |
grounds to dismiss the teacher, and 272 |
they were very strict, they were very 273 |
powerful because as I said they were 274 |
the board of education for the black 275 |
school system. And ah...the 276 |
superintendent would allow...the white 277 |
superintendent would rely on the 278 |
recommendation from the principal and 279 |
the trustee as to who they would 280 |
accept or who they would reject. Many 281 |
times as happened they would ah...get 282 |
people in [hire or recommend for hire] 283 |

that were favorable to one or two of 284 |
the board members [trustee board]. 285 |
-#
Did you have any experience in working 287
with Jeanes Supervisors? If so, tell 288
me about them. 289

Well, I worked under a Jeanes supervisor 291
but in my area they weren't effective. 292
I mean they didn't even concern 293
themselves with the area of Industrial 294
#-JEANES
Arts. Ah...in the academic areas they 295 -#
concerned themselves about that. I 296 |
didn't have any personal experience 297 |
with them...being in the area I was in. 298 |
But I know they existed, oh yes, yes. 299 |
The only lady that had a car in our 300 |
town was a Jeanes supervisor. They...it 301 |
seems that their role was to stand 302 |
between the school and the 303 |
superintendent and answer to the 304 |
state. It seems to me that was their 305 |
role. They couldn't come in a school 306 |
and supervise the school. They could 307 |
just observe the actions of the 308 |
school. They couldn't go into the 309 |
superintendent's office and tell him 310 |
what to do. They could observe his 311 |
actions and then they would report to 312 |
the state what was going on, that's 313 |
the way I conceived them. 314 -#

Did you ever have personal contact with 316
any trustees or Jeanes Supervisors? 317

#-TRUSTEES
I had an experience that ah...when I got 319 -#
out of college the trustees came to me 320 |
and asked me if I would consider 321 |

Appendix D: Participant Informed Consent Form

Participant's Informed Consent Form
Dissertation Research

The Politics of Race and Class and the Development of Public Education in Georgia: A Qualitative Study of Retired African American Teachers' Perspectives on Schooling in Georgia From 1930 to 1970

My name is Melvin A. Shelton. I am a doctoral candidate for the Ed. D. degree in Curriculum and Instruction at Valdosta State University. My telephone number is (229) 436-6008.

This is a study that will document your accounts and experiences as a public school teacher. The information collected from you will be used to compile elaborated notes and develop portraitures that will be used for completing the dissertation, which is a study that serves as partial fulfillment of requirements for the Doctorate of Education Degree in Curriculum and Instruction. It is possible that the dissertation in part or whole may be published at a later date.

Unless you provide express written authorization, at no time will your name be used in the study. The identity of all participants will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be used to report data collected from all participants. Only information that you agree to will be included in the report. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary and you are not compelled to participate. You have the right to and may withdraw from participation in this research project at any time without any consequences or penalty.

This is only a consent form, your signature on this form indicates that you have agreed to participate in the Retired Teacher Study under the conditions stated above and does not obligate you to any unspecified actions, conditions, or commitments.

The Valdosta State University Institutional Review Board has reviewed this research for the Protection of Human Research Subjects. Should you have any questions regarding the conduct of this research please contact Dr. M. H. Watson, IRB Administrator, at Valdosta State University, telephone (229) 333-7837.

_____
Signature of Retired Teacher (Participant)

_____ Date: _____
Signature of Researcher
Melvin Anthony Shelton, Doctoral Candidate
Department of Curriculum and Instructional Technology
Valdosta State University
Valdosta, Georgia 31698

Appendix E: IRB Approval

Valdosta State University
Office of Grants and Contracts
IRB Application for Review of Research
Involving Human Subjects

Submission of the following information is required for all research, which involves the use of human subjects. Take care to respond FULLY to all of the questions and attach the following documents:

1. A copy of interview questions, surveys, questionnaires, or other data gathering instruments, which may be used in the research project.

2. Proper Consent Form or forms (if needed).

3. Submit a short research proposal summary. If considered necessary by the Human Subjects Review Committee, the researcher should be prepared to submit a copy of their full proposal.

4. A copy of your research procedures/methodologies.

These materials will assist the IRB in determining the type of review necessary and facilitate approval of your research. The more complete your make your request for review, the faster your application can be processed.

NOTE: If the data-gathering instrument is changed, a revised version must be submitted to the IRB.

Section 1:

Name Melvin Anthony Shelton **Telephone Number** (229)-436-6008

E-mail Address mshelton@asurams.edu

Mailing Address 1324 Lily Pond Road
Albany, GA 31701

Department/College Curriculum and Instructional Technology in the College of Education-Valdosta State University

If this is a student research project be sure to complete all sections including the last section of this application for review.

Section 2:

Research Title Subjective Evaluation By Public School Teachers: A study of Retired African American Teachers' Perspectives on Race and Schooling 1930-1970

Sponsor's Name
(Necessary only if this research project is funded by an external organization)

Project Dissertation for Ed. D. Degree: A study of retired African American teachers designed to provide an inner perspective on their educational experiences and document their accounts of conditions and educational practices during the forty-year period immediately prior to 1970.

Start Date 01-02-01

End Date 12-30-02

Description of your research project and the procedures to be followed:

The research project is a study of retired African American teachers that will provide an inner perspective account of educational practices and conditions, which they experienced during the forty-year period prior to 1970. The purpose of the study is to present the culture, processes, resources, and conditions in education during this period.

The subjects will consist of retired African American teachers who taught in rural and city schools in different counties in Southwest Georgia. Formal and informal interviews will be conducted with approximately ten retired teachers who taught during the decades from 1930 through 1969. Interviews will take place in the subjects' homes or at another location appropriate for conducting interviews.

The research study is qualitative and has an emergent design. Therefore, the participating subjects will play a key role in what data is actually gathered and to what extent the direction of interview questions will proceed.

Tape recorders and notes will be used to collect data during interviews. The data will then be transcribed into elaborated notes, analyzed, coded, and entered into

the research report using a word processor. A written portraiture, which profiles each participant's character and perspectives on schooling in Georgia, will also be included in the study.

After completion of the study, audiotapes and notes that were compiled will be locked within my personal file cabinet located within my home and will remain stored there until I destroy them.

Describe the pool of subjects. The pool of subjects will consist of adult African American retired public school teachers who taught in public schools between 1930 and 1970.

How are the subjects to be recruited? The subjects will be contacted either face-to-face or by telephone. A brief oral explanation and description of the study (including its purpose) will be presented to them. They will then be asked if they will participate in the study and consent to an interview(s). Subjects will also be informed that they will be asked to sign a consent form if they agree to participate in the study.

What discomfort/risk to the subjects, if any, do you anticipate? I do not foresee any risks or discomforts to the subjects that will be involved in the study.

Could the research be done without using humans? No, the research could not be done without humans.

How will the subjects be informed that they do not have to participate in the study, and that they may withdraw at any time with no penalty? The researcher will inform the subjects that participation in the study is strictly voluntary and that they are not compelled to participate, and that they may withdraw from participating at any time during the study without any consequences or penalty. This information will also appear on the consent form that will be presented to each participant prior to his or her interview(s).

In what way have the confidentiality and privacy of the subjects' responses been ensured? All materials, interview notes, and comments provided by subjects will be secured with lock and key in the research file cabinet located within the researcher's home. Data will also be stored in my computer, which is password protected. Subjects will be given pseudo-names and care will be taken so that no identifying labels will be used to breach any confidentiality regarding subjects.

Is deception used with the human subjects? If yes, what debriefing procedures have been arranged? No deception will be used.

If the procedures are physically invasive or potentially harmful, describe arrangements made for medical referral. The procedures are not physically invasive or potentially harmful.

If the procedures could be emotionally upsetting, describe arrangements made for support services/assistance (i.e. psychological counseling, medical referral, other). The procedures are not emotionally upsetting.

What provisions have been made for cultural and language problems, if they arise? None of the subjects have cultural or language problems that will effect the research.

Has consent been obtained from the authorities where the research is to be conducted? The researcher will obtain consent from each subject prior to entering the subject's home to conduct the interview. If interviews take place outside of the subjects' homes, then it will be conducted in an appropriate public location such as a public restaurant or public library.

Section 3 - Consent Forms

Consent to participate must be obtained from the subjects if at all possible: Attach a copy of your written Informed Consent form to this request. If it is not possible to obtain a written consent form, describe, in written form and full detail, the explanation which will be given to the subjects and through what means you will provide this explanation: orally, use of an interpreter, other.
A copy of the consent form for this project is attached.

If the subjects are minors or members of a population classified as vulnerable (prisoners, mentally disabled individuals, etc), a positive parental/guardian consent is required as well as consent of the subject. Include a copy of the parental/guardian consent form you plan to use in such instances.

N/A

Section 4 - Student Research (Research for dissertation Ed. D. Degree)

Student's Faculty Advisor (supervising the research) Dr. Richard Schmertzing, Dissertation Chairman

Student's class for which research is being conducted as a class project. N/A

If the research is being conducted for a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation please indicate here.
The research is being conducted for the doctoral dissertation as partial fulfillment for the Ed. D. Degree.

Attach a copy of the letter from your committee indicating their approval of your research topic.

Faculty Consent and Approval of the student's research activity:

A letter is required from your Faculty Research Supervisor. The letter must show that your Research Supervisor has knowledge of the research project and gives their approval. The letter must state that they are willing to supervise the project and believe that the student-researcher is competent to conduct the research as described. The letter MUST BE SIGNED by your Faculty Research Supervisor and dated.